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THE
DUBLIN MAGAZINE

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WAR WIDOW

By Patrick MacDonogh

THESE are the self-same ways you walked, crazy with grief,
Waking this sleeping water to hear your stumbling woes,
Blind with importunate tears when the wild-duck rose from
the lake,

And hoping your heart might break before the fall of the leaf.
But sight was stark in the dawn, and the heart refused to break,
And, thronged or alone, it ached until, with the star-bright sloes,
The pains of the dying year were lost in the pangs of spring
And, breaking from blinding lilies, the clamorous drake arose,—
But the wild-duck moaned in the ozier bed, spreading a wounded
wing.

These are the willow boughs that wept, casting wild shade,
When, with protesting murmurs, you saw in love's disguise
The face of the warring world, as the moon came over the hill,
And the individual heart, the innocent life betrayed
By nobleness of mind serving a brutal will.
Then the quivering branch was still, and stillness grew in your
eyes,

Struggling no more against grief and, lifting your listening head
To hear the wild-duck moaning, you laughed your gay good-byes
From a heart that you hoped was dying to a love already dead.

Break no more from the willow branch emblems of grief,
 For you that were death's rival must take a live love soon,
 Drowning in curtained laughter the wild-duck's endless moan,
 And walking no more alone in woods where a falling leaf
 Brings him again from the sky, who journeyed proud and alone,
 Doomed as the conquering drone, shattered in blazing noon,—
 Give him again to death, for your time draws near to break
 This grief-charmed ghostly circle, your six-year's honeymoon,
 And the dead leaves, mixed in the waking earth, fell for the live
 leaf's sake.

Three Poems by Y. L.

LAMENT

BEAUTY still would tame my heart
 But she has lost her nonchalance
 For I have listed down with death
 And day is but the swan's cruel stare.

The wind like musk has lost its scent.
 The blind have bitten off the gold.
 The swallows' entrance in the air
 Is that of puppets, shamed, threadbare.

The trees are pressed on block of night,
 White-podded shadows join the moon;
 Wet needles sew a melody
 As tattered as the red seaweed.

What would I do with green and gold
 After the things that I have seen:
 The bowl, the cord, and the empty street
 Are fallen in an icy heap.

Break then the wheel for she is gone.
 The hours lie still, and yet live on.

VARIATION

JUST now it seemed a little thing
 That death should ward the flesh,
 The intricate web be sieved to wanton dust.
 But then I saw light dazzle a seagull's head,
 A magpie's straight-coursed flight past
 Green-globed fruit and wind-still trees,
 Dark hills adorn the sky, and it
 Cool valleys with its silver.

I heard design of viola yield
 In music passionate to cello,
 And thought how once a hidden bird
 Plucked the hid sting of sorrow.

I knew the tenuous bridge between
 Two minds, the pattern of the wind
 And trees and beasts and living men,
 Craftsman's imprint, the centuries' pace,
 Gold-throbbing the leisured night.

I would not look my last on things
 And in my hands hold nothingness.
 I would haunt earth's lovely pool
 And deeply drink to taste far heaven.

AFTER ECKHART

GREEN stripling and golden-browed
 The daffodils, and white impeachment
 Of dark hill splendour, or blue-dipping
 The birds and the thin sedges,
 Coloured flames and the molten.
 Art Thou thus?

Sweet breath of larks in spring,
 The fostering by water-pools
 Of shadows, sun, and empty craft,

Warm hush to line the alb of snow,
Bright choristers of farthest night.
Art Thou thus ?

Rush-flight of swallows
And crawl of the earthy rain,
A water-net to hold the gelid light,
The lovely tremble of each frost,
The frenzy of an autumn drift.
Art Thou thus ?

Or hidden path
Through the invisible most light
And music intoned sans instrument,
Where pain is core of everything
And grief the unguent of long years.
Art Thou thus ?

Ah, there is one only net for Thee :
This silence that empowers me.

THE SECOND KISS

A LIGHT COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

By Austin Clarke

Characters :

Pierrot
Pierrette
Harlequin
Columbine

Scene : An open space near Templeogue, or any other English-speaking district outside Dublin.

The stage is set with black curtains. On left, front, the garden gate of a villa, bearing the name, 'Cosy Nook'; on right, front, a painted cut-out of a small tree. Right, near centre, a grassy bank. The kiss, with which the play commences, should exceed by three seconds the emotional duration allowed by the Film Censor, for there is no stage censorship yet. As the curtain rises, all is in complete darkness, so that Pierrot and Pierrette cannot be seen, but their voices are heard in a loud stage whisper.

PIERROT : Darling . . .

PIERRETTE : Darling . . .

(Spotlight gradually rises, showing them clasped in a long kiss),

PIERROT *(turning)* : Look ! the moon at last.

PIERRETTE : Our clock was right.

PIERROT *(smiling)* : Only our hearts were fast.

PIERRETTE : Let us go home now, Pierrot, forget the moon.

PIERROT : Why do you want to go to bed so soon ?

(rapt)

All maps are silver now. Go where thought will,
Midsummer fills a million miles of space.

PIERRETTE *(peevish by his reverie)* :

Pierrot, the moon is rude. It makes your face—

PIERROT *(waking up)* : Too pale ?

PIERRETTE : No, blue.

PIERROT *(rubbing his chin)* : Did I forget to shave ?

PIERRETTE : You're laughing at me.

PIERROT : True.

(catching her round waist) Let's misbehave !
Do something shocking !

PIERRETTE (*withdrawing*) : Quite impossible !

We're married now.

(*suppressing a little yawn*)

Come home to bed.

PIERROT (*teasingly*) :

Who fell

Asleep at nine last night ?

PIERRETTE (*playfully*) :

I did.

PIERROT :

Then stay

Up late to-night . . .

(*striking an attitude*)

and we'll perform a play.

PIERRETTE (*surprised*) : A play ?

PIERROT (*nods and points to moon*) : Our spotlight.

PIERRETTE :

But we left the door

Wide open, dear.

PIERROT :

What matter to the four

Of us !

PIERRETTE :

The four ?

What do you mean ?

PIERROT :

Look round.

PIERRETTE : There's nobody.

PIERROT :

Our shadows on the ground !

PIERRETTE (*happily, as they both mime*) :

I know. We'll chase them to the garden wall,

Pierrot, and make them very big—

PIERROT :

and small.

PIERRETTE : For comedy can prove by night—

PIERROT :

that black—

PIERRETTE : Is white.

PIERROT (*hopping*) :

Poor Pantaloon, who finds a tack

In every carpet slipper.

PIERRETTE :

Columbine ?

PIERROT : The dance that hides the clothes peg on the line !

PIERRETTE (*considering*) : No, all that jumping round would

weary us.

We must walk on like this—be serious.

PIERROT :

Gesticulate ?

PIERRETTE :

—like actors that we know.

PIERROT :

I'll be an elongated Romeo—

PIERRETTE (*tenderly*) : Stooping to kiss me, dear—

PIERROT :

in silhouette !

THE SECOND KISS

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PIERRETTE (*leaning on his shoulder*):

What shall I look like as your Juliet?

PIERROT (*caricaturing in air*):

Victorian Virtue—

To run— catching up her clothes

all bustle—

bandy whatnots—

nose

More pointed than my own—

and such a chin.

PIERRETTE (*bursting into tears*):

I hate your nasty play. I'm going in.

(*runs left*)

PIERROT (*following her*):

But listen, darling. Don't you understand!

(*She dabs her eyes with a tiny handkerchief. He goes on one knee and catches her other hand.*)

PIERRETTE: You do not love your wife. Let go my hand.

PIERROT (*rising, pleadingly*):

Pierrette!

PIERRETTE (*at gate*): Last night you said that you adored

My shadow in pyjamas—

(*turning as she closes gate*)

now you're bored.

PIERROT (*centre alone, to audience*):

I meant no harm. I hate domestic dramas.

(*moving left, looking*)

The windows flash—

two—

three—

six startled eyes

Across the trellises and lawn. She flies

Upstairs and down again to every switch in

The drawingroom, hall, the bathroom, pantry,

kitchen,

As if the house in one gigantic huff

Had hidden lipstick, cold cream, powder puff.

(*in anguish*)

The fuse has blown and all is darkness now.

No...

—shaken by her rage a frightened bough

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

Has fallen down and snapped the electric cable.
I'm wrong . . .

She's found them on her dressing-table—
For in our bedroom, beaming with content,
I see one bulb.

(holding out arms)

O Darling, do relent.

(hesitantly approaching)

She's at our window now. She must have beckoned . .
But if I am mistaken . . .

(indicating his heart)

Wait a second !

I'm right. I knew my darling would be kind.
(starting back)

Dear me !

What's that ?

She's banging down the blind.

(considering)

I must be cautious, stay awhile, then creep
Along the bannisters, when she's asleep.

(with sudden resolve)

No, I'll endure the dawn, with tragic gloom,
Hugging the sofa in the breakfast room.
My heart is . . .

(trying to remember line)

dated . . .

no . . . weighted . . .

deflated . . .

(edging right, in a stage whisper) Cue.

(edging nearer)

Quick, quick, the cue, please.

VOICE OF HARLEQUIN *(right, sepulchral)* : Pierrot !

PIERROT *(jumping back, alarmed)* : Who are you ?

(to audience)

A ghost as prompt !

VOICE OF HARLEQUIN *(in normal tone)* : Think, Pierrot !

PIERROT *(in terror)* : Harlequin !

What do you want with me ?

VOICE OF HARLEQUIN : I've come to win—

PIERROT *(realising)* : To win—

VOICE OF HARLEQUIN : your wife.

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B

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

You cannot come to-night upon this stage.
(waits, listening, then investigates cautiously)

He's gone.

I'm really getting very clever.

(shaking himself)

But what is running down my back?

—a shiver!

I dare not risk another prompt.

(fingering his forehead)

What's next?

(to audience)

If you will pardon me, I'll read the text.

(reading slowly)

'Pierrot becoming sad and rather pensive'—

(indignantly)

I'm not. I'm feeling very apprehensive.

There's some mistake...

(turning pages feverishly)

This cannot be the play.

The lines are different. My head's astray.

(coming front, reading title page)

'A Comedy'... this light is much too dim...

'By Austin Clarke'... I never heard of him.

(confidentially to audience)

I'll read the stage directions, scan the plot.

(He reads slowly, instinctively obeying each direction)

'First, Pierrot moves up, centre—

to the spot.'

(The spot lights up)

'Back curtains open'—

(As he waves his hand, reading, they do so)

'Cyclorame—pale blue'

(He looks up, nods approvingly)

'Sits down on grassy bank'—

(He does so)

'Music on cue—

He falls asleep... and daintily tip-toeing,

A Columbine—from right.'

(Jumping up and putting script in pocket)

I must be going.

I'm married now.

(blowing a kiss)

THE SECOND KISS

II

So, Columbine . . . goodbye.

(*pausing*)

I wonder what she's like.

No harm to try . . .

Precaution : just pretend to be asleep.

(*sternly*)

Now promise, Pierrot, nothing but a peep.

(*Sits down, closes eyes and smiles. Smile fades. Opens eyes*)

No Columbine ! I'm much too ill-at-ease.

Ah ! something I forgot—

(*runs to footlights, to orchestra*)

the music, please !

(*Runs back and sits down as soft music starts, closes eyes, then with a happy sigh makes himself more comfortable and falls asleep. The music fades away and there is silence for a few seconds. Columbine enters, right, upstage, hesitant, and as if in fear. She is dressed exactly in the same costume as Pierrette but wears a mask. She moves gracefully and yet sadly to left, discovers Pierrot, and crosses to right. The audience at this point has considerable advantage over the dreaming Pierrot and realises that Columbine is being played by the same actress who has already appeared as Pierrette. Slow action.*)

COLUMBINE (*gently*) : Pierrot !

Pierrot !

PIERROT (*slowly rising, rapt*) :

Columbine !

COLUMBINE (*running to him*) :

They kept

Me, darling, in the darkness, though I wept.

PIERROT (*as if to himself*) :

Imaginative darkness none can share.

COLUMBINE (*in alarmed anguish, as he starts back*) :

What is it, Pierrot ?

PIERROT (*urgently*) :

That mask. Why do you wear

That mask again ? Why do you wear it ? Tell

Me, tell me, Columbine.

COLUMBINE (*in gentle reproach*) : You know too well.

PIERROT :

Yes, yes, I know too well. Poor eyelids red

With weeping. Shadow of tears that must be shed.

(*Trying to be cheerful, with a quick gesture towards her eyes*)

To make those pupils dance, my Columbine,

The poison drops of joy !

See how they shine.

COLUMBINE : Only because my lashes still are wet,

PIERROT (*still trying to be cheerful*) :

We must examine them.

(*He moves to unfasten mask. She stops him*)

COLUMBINE :

I dare not yet.

PIERROT : Dark domino, a thought can separate us !

(*going centre, right*)

What have we done that mind should always hate
us,

The old conundrum need a new solution
For every turn of brain ? Is evolution
No more—and faith the fashion for bare knees ?
Shall we unscrutinise, uphold, appease
With flattery, continual applause—
Last exercise of hands and feet and jaws ?
Can we be saved, perhaps, by mathematics ?
Too hard !

Let's be profound.

(*Runs to her pretending to have a stethoscope, leaps back,
pointing triumphantly to her heart*).

Why, even that ticks

And proves the universe still goes by clockwork !

COLUMBINE (*sadly, coming to him*) :

We found the dreadful door.

PIERROT :

But will the lock work

Or bend the hairpin that you gave me, dear,
For key ?

COLUMBINE (*softly*) : So long ago.

PIERROT :

We reappear

With consciousness and find, for all we think,
The copybook has run off with the ink.

COLUMBINE : Poor Pierrot !

PIERROT (*puzzled*) :

Columbine.

COLUMBINE (*obediently*) :

Yes, dear.

PIERROT :

What happened

The last time ? Did some unexpected clap end
The comedy ?

COLUMBINE (*as they sit down*) : Think, dear.

PIERROT (*trying to remember*) : A countryside

Between the towns—

COLUMBINE :

where birds had gone to hide

In little woods—

PIERROT : no higher than your shoulder—

COLUMBINE : So many birds, the eggshell made them bolder,
Outpecked by song.

PIERROT (*shuddering*) : But, Columbine, those cries on
The branches after dark and that horizon—
The sun, a burning mine among the trees,
Still there at night, pitfall of armouries,
Fire-washers, huge pig-iron smelting works.

COLUMBINE : Pierrot, we knew the suddenness that lurks
In air to strip the plaster from each room
And foolishly we fled into the doom
Of city after city.

PIERROT : Terrible sound
Came faster than sight, killing its own rebound—

COLUMBINE : Obeyed the needle nodding round the dial—

PIERROT : The rapid calculation—
—last espial

COLUMBINE : Of expert earth.

PIERROT : Could skies be starrier ?
Expanding sparks and all they carry, err
In dropping cemetaries blown to pieces ?
Can passing finger know what it releases ?

COLUMBINE : Flyaway bodies lighter than cubes of air
They suck as sweets ; young men went up to dare
The sunny prism, gay with tab and facing,
Through future childhood died ; specks that were
chasing
A glory, frail as the uniform they donned,
Chasing it through the vacuum beyond
Our globe.

(*Light begins to dim*)

PIERROT : How could poor citizens escape
When solids took again their ancient shape
Of unsubstantiality ?

COLUMBINE : We fled
As ghosts when all belief in them is dead,
A glimmer of white clothes—

PIERROT : mere phosphorus—

COLUMBINE : For comedy had seen the last of us.

(*They are in darkness*)

PIERROT (*rising*): Where are you, Columbine? I cannot find
You anywhere.

COLUMBINE: Here, darling, close as mind.
(*Light rises again, gradually grows gay, with rose and
amber hues*)
Look, Pierrot, a skylight! Laugh and learn your part
Again.

PIERROT (*searching*): My script?

COLUMBINE: I know our lines by heart:
(*They sit down*)

COLUMBINE: The trivial circumstances that tormented
Our waking hours, the authors who invented
Excuses when we tried to run away
Together—lest we spoil another play.

PIERROT: And all the wicked gossiping and fuss
That seemed to make our love ridiculous.
Dark gallery and pit, those hidden faces.

COLUMBINE: Appointments kept—

PIERROT: but always in wrong places.
(*unhappily*)

That park bench in the rain, the dredge of leaves,
I sat there wrapped in miserable sleeves,
All winter. Then I heard a great clock strike
The dark; and climbed the railings—

COLUMBINE: and the spike
That tore your jacket—

PIERROT: bruised my arm—

COLUMBINE (*tenderly*): I bound it—

PIERROT: And left an iron kiss.

COLUMBINE (*softly*): That night, I found it
Above your heart—another violet.

PIERROT: But we were always happy when we met.
The picnic rolls—

COLUMBINE: enough for two—

PIERROT: (*He sits at her feet*) . . . that day
Among the mountains over Fiesole!
The bread we carried—

COLUMBINE: bigger than a baton.

PIERROT: The wine-fall in the flask at noon.

COLUMBINE: We sat on
The ground among rock-roses in a pine wood,

THE SECOND KISS

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PIERROT : The paper napkin that you wore—how mine would
Keep falling down.

COLUMBINE : That sausage—

PIERROT : that sausage
peppered !

COLUMBINE : peppered !
 pink !

PIERROT: A clown might envy it—

COLUMBINE : each bite—

PIERROT : each site
a drink.

COLUMBINE: The world went wrong—

PIERROT : yet right—

COLUMBINE : because the moon

Came out to see the sun—

PIERROT: —an hour too soon.

COLUMBINE: At dark we heard a serenade below.

The double parts that kept together—

PIERROT (*holding her hand*): slow

Upon guitar—

COLUMBINE : —and fast on mandolin.

PIERROT: Those voices answering through thick and thin,

Such melody—we stopped to listen—

COLUMBINE : kissed

More often than we meant to, dear,

PIERROT : —and missed

The tram.

(As a tremendous idea occurs to him, getting up)

Wait, Columbine.

COLUMBINE (*obediently*): Yes, dear.

PIERROT : I wonder

Was all that misery, each stupid blunder
Our share, because we weren't always good.

COLUMBINE: Rock-roses do not grow in every wood,

Pierrot.

PIERROT: Suppose . . . how can I put it . . . Well

In order to become respectable,

Suppose that we . . .

you promise not to frown . . .

COLUMBINE : I promise, dear.

PIERROT: . . . get married, settle down.

COLUMBINE (*laughing*): The first time either of us thought of asking!

PIERROT : You will ?

COLUMBINE (*rising*) : Of course.

Now I can dare unmasking !
Pierrot, don't look till you have counted three.

(He covers his face partly with his hands and counts slowly with lip mime. She turns, throws away mask and turns round again, hiding her face now with her hands as if in playful parody of him)

PIERROT (*turning*) : Why do you smile yet keep your eyes from me,
Your very hands reflect them as they shine—

COLUMBINE : And hide the blushes—

(She turns away so that her face is still hidden as she lowers her hands)

of your Columbine !

(She runs off right, followed by Pierrot)

COLUMBINE (*far away*) : Pierrot !

Pierrot !

PIERROT (*off*) :

Columbine,

Where are

You, dear ?

(nearer again) Where are you ?

(He appears at back against cyclorame, from right)

Have I gone too far ?

(Bewildered, he runs off, right, again)

I cannot hear you calling.

(The cyclorame gradually becomes a darker blue and a low ominous drumming is heard. Pierrot is seen backing in from right, in terror, towards the stage. Drumming becomes louder, stops, as Harlequin leaps in from right. Through the eye-slits of his demi-mask appear goggles. He carries a little rod or wand)

PIERROT :

Harlequin !

HARLEQUIN : All darkens, Pierrot. Top begins to spin
And hum : the final giddiness of globe. Isle,
River and rock—geography is mobile.
Mankind arrived too late to learn the truth,
But roars each time it cuts another tooth,
Fighting to gain possession of those toys
Which end in silence, but begin with noise.
If hotheads play at giants, hit too hard,
What matter if the building blocks are charred ?
I am the spirit of all new inventions
Known for their speed and excellent intentions.
My pantomime was once the sweating stoker,
A funny fellow with a red-hot poker.

I found a smaller act to save that toil
 And on a billion tons of heat and oil,
 I fed my new performing flea, the spark-
 That tickles happy travellers through the dark :
 And while you fall in love, each time, more frantic,
 I talk in air, I leap the great Atlantic ;
 So prove my right, Pierrot, to take the stage,
 The spirit of the quick in every age.

PIERROT (*wildly*) : Back, back ! Your balanced couplets are a
 trick

To catch my Columbine.

HARLEQUIN (*deprecating*) : The hemistich
 Is far too wooden.

PIERROT (*more wildly*) : And you substituted
 That play for mine—

HARLEQUIN : —and so electrocuted
 Your missing heart !

PIERROT : You loathe me.

HARLEQUIN : Yes.

But true

PIERROT : To friendship, put the other point of view.
 Back, Harlequin, I know your roof at last,
 God's messenger—a midge upon the blast,
 The devil striving to be orthodox—
 The coffin-lid of hope . . . Jack-in-the-box,
 Black in the face with rage that cannot hurt,
 A tiny upstart wagging in a shirt
 And jumping to a wire-pull, halfway in
 And halfway out, the toyman, Harlequin.
 All history shows the harmless and the meek win,
 When gone are spangle, diamond and sequin.

(*The cyclorame has become bright again*)

HARLEQUIN : Pierrot, I think you've lost your sense of humour.
 No brush above the chimney ever drew more
 Than bags of soot. Fire likes a little smoke !
 I meant it all, believe me, as a joke,

(*indicating*)

A painted lath, a borrowed pair of goggles
 At which your pained imagination boggles.

PIERROT : Another trick !

HARLEQUIN : No. No. Your love endures.
 And Columbine? She is already yours.
 And just to prove no wife could be so fond
 Pierrot, I will pretend to have a wand.

(Low drumming is heard)

PIERRETTE *(off, left, downstage)* : Pierrot !

(Harlequin smiles, vanishes in black-out, during which back curtains are drawn. Pierrette appears at garden gate, in white silk pyjamas, carrying a Chinese lantern. She has an embroidered wrap and pretty mules)

PIERRETTE *(running to him)* : Pierrot !

PIERROT *(still dazed)* : Pierrette !

PIERRETTE : Can you forgive

 Your naughty little wife ?

PIERROT *(by rote)* : How can I live

 Without you, dear ?

PIERRETTE : And yet I left you, all

 Alone !

(anxiously)

 Your sleeve is dusty.

 Did you fall ?

PIERROT *(nervously)* : No. No.

PIERRETTE *(as she brushes his coat)* : We must not quarrel any
 more.

BOTH : We promise truly.

PIERRETTE : And you do adore

 My shadow ?

PIERROT : Even now when it has fled—

(sighing)

 Wish for the moon !

PIERRETTE *(giving him lantern)* : I brought this one instead.

PIERROT : You think of everything !

(She looks up, alarmed)

PIERROT : But you are frightened ?

PIERRETTE : The clouds are strange, Pierrot,

 Suppose it lightened !

PIERROT *(soothing her playfully with a triplet)* :

 Only a summer storm among the hills.

 Down comes the rain, chases the silly rills

 Into the great new reservoir and fills—

 A milli-millimetre !

 You remember.

The day we saw it all, the mile-long camber
Of concrete—

PIERRETTE (*softly*): Dear, the week of our engagement—

PIERROT: The travelling crane—you asked me what the cage
meant—

The chain, the steam that grovelled in mud and
marling.

PIERRETTE: Now let the clouds come down in buckets, darling!

PIERROT: Darling!

(*They are clasped in a long kiss. At last, Pierrot picks up
lantern and they turn towards the garden gate*)

PIERRETTE: I left the curtains all undrawn.

Look, flowering trellises and half the lawn.

PIERROT: No light in any villa now but ours.

PIERRETTE (*rapt*): Rock roses in the garden—

PIERROT (*smiling*): keep late hours.

(*Pierrot closes the gate and the curtain falls*)

THE END.

A limited and signed edition of this Comedy will be published shortly by the Bridge
Press, Templeogue, Co. Dublin.

THE POETS' BABYLON

By Padraic Colum

“THE blue dusk ran between the streets,” chanted A.E.
“My love was winged within my mind,” and thereupon
the Babylon of temples, towers and fountains comes to
him, lighted by “a red sunset that was dead and lost beyond
a million days.” How many poets since the days of the exiled
singer in the Bible have brought mystery and grandeur into
their verse by invoking the city that, a thousand years before
Nebuchadnezzar boasted of it, Hammurabi, fixed on as his capital,
naming it The Gate of the God! “And all man’s Babylons
strive but to impart The Grandeurs of his Babylonian heart”;
“The Babylonian starlight brought a fabulous, formless darkness
in.” It is not merely because they refer to something beyond

our ken that a sense of mystery and grandeur is brought over to us by the namers of the city : it is as if the wonder that a savage or a countryman feels at the sight of streets and buildings and public works revives in us at the mention of the first of the great city civilizations—as though we felt an astonishment that belongs to racial memory. The Babylonians themselves seem to have had a like feeling about their metropolis, and if their epic *Gilgamish* reflects the surprise of the metropolitan on first encountering savage man, it reflects also their own sense of the marvellousness of the city with its temples and palaces, its bread and beds. And when the city was in the state that the Rome of the Popes compared with the Rome of the Caesars was in, Herodotus still marvelled at its walls and towers and brazen gates.

Astronomy and astrology, arithmetic and divination, had their beginnings in Babylon. Isaiah exults as much over the destruction of its profane learning as over the crippling of its military and political power. "Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee ; and thou hast said in thine heart, ' I am, and none else beside me ' . . . Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth, . . . Thou are wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee."

One thinks of the Babylonian as the most burthened of all great civilizations. Everything is ponderous—the buildings, the sculptures, the religion, the tablets and script, the men, even—these kings and priests seem to have a greater bulk and to move more heavily than the men of other civilizations : it is as if this primeval state was like a primeval creature and had to armour itself. Then a simpler and more mobile world comes into existence with the fall of that ponderous, long-enduring civilization : the Persian carvings, the Hebrew psalms are in a freer world than the Babylonian sculptures and hymns. This people seem to have had the burthen of a feeling that chaos was close to them : the most dramatic of all mythologies is the conquest of chaos by their divine hero. Babylonian myth-makers distinguished the powers of chaos from the gods of order in the same way as Keats distinguished the Saturnian from the Apollonian gods—by their

disregard of harmony. The gods troubled the ancient repose by their singing.—

 Their way has become greivous to me,
 By day I find not peace, by night I sleep not.
 I will destroy and confound their ways.
 Let tranquillity reign and let us sleep, even us.

The singing of the gods is the first effort towards order ; the complaint of the powers of chaos is in the name of that inertia that opposes itself to the effort towards order. When the first confrontation of the gods of order with the powers of chaos comes, the gods subdue them with a spell. But this is not conquest, and the chief of the powers of chaos prepares to destroy the gods. Something more than spells has to be used to save the movers towards order ; an heroic effort is called for. It is then that Marduk strives as a hero against Tiamat and her powers, destroys them and organizes the universe.

The literature of this civilization is weighted with curses just as its records have a monotony of boastfulness.—

Before the brightness of my mighty arrows they had fear, and their cities they abandoned. A mountain difficult of access they occupied. Three mountain peaks, which like the mist reached into heaven, over which no bird could find its passage, the place as their stronghold they made. After them I rode. At these mountain peaks I arrived. In a single day like an eagle over them I rushed. Multitudes of their soldiers I slew ; their spoil, their treasure, their goods, their oxen, their asses, their sheep, horses trained to the yoke, bulls which have two humps and horns, to a countless number from the midst of the mountains I caused to be brought down. Five hundred cities which were dependant upon them I threw down, dug up, and burned with fire. The corpses of their warriors, like rubbish I scattered. An image of my magnified royalty I made. The laws of Assur my lord, the decrees of my ascendancy and the full history of the deeds of my hand, which in the country of the Nahri I wrought, upon it I wrote.—

Even when their records are not of destructiveness and oppression, the boastfulness of these devotees of force is in them.—

Work in bronze I overlaid substantially on its gates, bulls of strong bronze and molten images for their thresholds, strongly. Those large gates for the admiration of multitudes of men with

wreathed work I filled: the abode of Imzu-Bel the invincible castle of Babylon, which no previous king had effected, four thousand cubits complete, the walls of Babylon whose banner is invincible, as a high fortress by the ford of the rising sun, I carried round Babylon. Its fosse I dug and its mass with cement and brick I reared up and a tall tower at its side like a mountain I built. The great gates whose wall I constructed with ikki and pine woods and coverings of copper I overlaid them, to keep off enemies from the front of the wall of unconquered Babylon. Great waters like the might of the sea I brought near in abundance and their passing by was like the passing of the great billows of the Western ocean; passages through them were none, but heaps of earth I heaped up, and embankments of brickwork I caused to be constructed. The fortresses I skilfully strengthened and the city of Babylon I fitted to be a treasure-city.—

These people are always ready with curses; even the divinities oppress each other with them.—

The Porter entered, and said to Eresh Kigal

‘These curses thy sister Ishtar utters,
Blaspheming thee with great curses.’

When Eresh Kigal heard this

She grew pale like a flower that is cut off:

She trembled like the stem of a reed:

‘I will cure her rage,’ she said, ‘I will cure her fury:

These curses I will repay her!

Light up consuming flames! light up blazing straw!

Let her doom be with the husbands who deserted their wives!

Let her doom be with the wives who from their husbands’
sides departed!

Let her doom be with the youths who led dishonored lives.’

But there must have been something besides stern drama in the lives of the Babylonians. A suggestion of the idyllic is in the record that tells how Hammurabi invited the governors of his provinces to a sheep-shearing in Babylon. One likes to think of these bearded, unbending men, staffs in their hands, looking over the flocks in some palace court thronged with figures of colossal bulls and strange creature with hoofs and claws.—

Marvels that showed a mighty will,
Huge power and hundred-handed skill,

That seek prostration and not praise
Too faint such lofty ears to fill!

As George Darley, visualizing such monuments, exclaimed.

We made something idyllic out of the greatest of the Babylonian stories, transforming into Venus and Adonis their Ishtar and Thammuz. In the Babylonian, it is Ishtar's descent into the world of the dead that makes the drama: at each of the seven stages in her descent, before one or another of the gates, she has to surrender one of the ornaments that were her pride and the symbols of her immortality. In a form that gives us an impression of an inscription on a Babylonian tablet, John Hall Wheelock gives a version of Ishtar's descent.—

At the first gate, when she was come,
The keeper struck off her crown, the sign of her head,
Also, her high tiara he struck with his hand:

"Enter, O lady, and come,
Of Allat it is the command—
To the place where the stars are dead
Enter and come."

At the second gate, at that gate
To the vaults of darkness, the palace of rain and rust,
The rings from her ears, her ear-rings, he made them free:

"Enter, O lady, the gate,
Of Allat it is the decree—
The gate that is scattered with dust,
Lo, this is the gate."

At the third gate, and at the third,
The necklace binding her neck, the circlet about,
It broke in his hand, also it fell at his touch:

"Obey, O lady, the word,
The order of Allat is such
In the city that hears no shout,
Where no laughter is heard."

To the fourth gate when she had pressed,
The cincture of her breast, the breast-band laid on her breast,
The ornaments thereof, the jewels at his touch they fell:

"Make bare, O lady, thy breast,
Of Allat it is the will
In the land where the winds have rest,
Where the waves have rest."

But why consider Babylon these times? For one reason, because that consideration helps us to get away from the times for a while. Its conquests and foundations are now matter for our wonder. Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar are fabulous, and the more their scribes attach them to events, the more fabulous they appear. At the same time, what we can read about this civilization is more comprehensive than any imaginative invention could be. And we discover that many of our beliefs have come to us from its temple-schools. "I have found a sentence under that one that says—as though to show it had a hidden meaning—a beggar wrote it upon the walls of Babyon," says a pupil in *The Hour Glass*.

And so for many evenings I have read in the volumes that bear the venerable names of Sayce, Renouf, Budge, George Smith, and the more recent ones of Stephen Herbert Langdon. And my wonder at Babylon has received increment through my wonder at the scholars who have revealed this civilization to us. How did they, from symbols that look so abstract, re-create a language that had not been spoken for thousands of years and then translate the records in it? Perhaps one part of their task, for a scholar, anyway, was not so extraordinary. The, so to speak, modern language of Babylon was a Semetic one, and could be understood through well-known languages. But back of that language, the Accadian, was another language of a different formation, the antique Sumerian, and that language, too, the scholars had to make themselves proficient in. They had bilingual inscriptions to go on, but how they discovered what the sounds of Sumerian were can never be explained to me. Yes, and these scholars can even tell when, translating from the Sumerian into the Accadian, a scribe makes a mistake.

The present writer disclaims having done anything comparable to this, but he likes mentioning that he did detect a mistake in the text of *Finnegans Wake*. "The house of O'Shea or O'Shame, *quivapieno*, known as the Haunted Ink-bottle, no number Brimstone Walk, Asia in Ireland, as it was infested with the raps, with the penname SHUT sepia-scraped on the doorplate and a blind of black sailcloth over its wan phwinshogue . . ." "Phwinshogue" is not the word the scribe would have written if his memory of the O'Growney tablet had been absolutely clear.

FUNERAL FROM FLYNN'S

By Michael J. Murphy

IT was the last clay pipe in the box. Patrick was taking it up to clean it of the blue-mould and stains when, from the bed, James' breathing began to make that parched, funnelling gasp again. Patrick watched . . . waiting . . .

He snored relief when the sound broke into a panting again, and then took a breath; a slow, wheezy breath, closing his powerful lips on it grimly, sprawlingly. For a moment his jowls trembled; and the gleam which had started up in his eyes steadied, then smouldered, a drowsy, triumphant gleam.

He cleaned the pipe patiently, and just as patiently began to fill it from the last ounce of tobacco, kept moist in the cabbage leaves beside him. Then he placed the pipe on top of the pile in the crock between his knees. He took another slow breath but, holding it a moment, seized the pipe again, examined it, and rubbed it with the emery before replacing it. Then he grabbed the cabbage leaves and sniffed them. The whiff of the tobacco came strongly. They had better go on the dunghill at once—Better still, bury them in a gullion of water.

He took up the last ounce, squeezing it. From an inside pocket of the swallowtail he brought out a wooden pipe, dry and dusty. Once more the jowls trembled and he sighed, putting the pipe and tobacco away.

Rising, his head bobbed into the sunbeam leaning across the hearth and, dropping back, he pulled out his watch. The glinting of its gold casing stabbed at his eyes.

Twenty-five to twelve . . . Over half an hour since the last bell had rung for second Mass. This was the curate's Mass. A quick wee man—beggin' he's robes. Never preached; never left the altar. Just read the announcements. And then . . .

" . . . and for all those whose names are on the Parish Dead List. And your charitable prayers are also requested for the spiritual and temporal welfare of JAMES FLYNN . . . of Boolethra, who is dangerously ill. Our Father Who art in Heaven . . . "

Slipping the watch back the gold chain ran taut. He removed it to a higher pocket, his face grim. He got up, shuffling to the window, his hands behind his back. Beyond the valley, the

fields sagged from the butt of the mountain like bags drying on a line. The chapel was there below him, set on a ridge which ran out of the mountain like a recumbent leg; a heathery monster of a thigh patched with miserable fields and stitched into great seams of stone ditches. Was yon the Mass people comin' out . . . ? Ah, it was as dark now as a cloud shadow before the chapel gate where the men stood to talk and smoke and watch the women leaving. They'd be passing remarks of James now . . . Passing remarks of the Flynn headstone in the graveyard—the finest there yet beside the chapel.

“James be to take bad between the Masses . . .”

“He bet”—God give him a good hour. Bed-fast this twelve months. Well, many's the fine funeral left Flynn's . . .”

And wasn't there . . . Twenty pounds on his mother when the people only paid a shilling of offerings. And ten traps. Thirty-five on his father, and a whole *street* of traps and motor cars. Forty on Michael, with the big cattle men paying a pound apiece, and two whole columns in *The Examiner*.

And before turning from the window, Patrick's grip on his wrist tightened.

He had swirled the cabbage leaves in the gullion of brackish water at the dunghill, and had carried the crockful of pipes to the other room. At the press, his eyes again went over the quarts of whiskey till—with a start—they alighted on an empty Baby Power at the back. His hand clawed for it. The powerful lips were grim, but trembling a little, as he trudged up to the garden, to a heap of nettles which hid the glitter of broken glass around a stone. Then he returned to the house to wait for his sympathisers and well-wishers.

He was almost curt the way he told the women to come in; and when they gawked around the spotless kitchen, and at the big coal fire, he clasped his hands behind his back and crossed to the hearth, a little stooped, the watch-chain swinging in the sunbeam.

About three in the afternoon, James died. He thanked the women who were going to wash the corpse. And, as his hands were still behind his back, he nodded towards a chest of drawers. “All yous want is there,” he said, and turned towards the kitchen, where three men drew apart and rose in turn to shake his hand.

“I'm sorry for your trouble, Patrick . . .”

"I know that, Tom." And he was nodding.

"I'm sorry for your trouble, Patrick . . ."

"I know that, Ned . . ."

The men sat again, self-consciously, glancing covertly at one another, their hands sandwiched between elbows and knees. In the distance a cock crowed ; further off, another answered. Now and then, with her sleeves rolled up, a woman hurried down for water, spoke to one, looked at no one, and returned ; and the silence was back again, the men glancing covertly.

One man coughed and sat erect. "Patrick," he began, "Patrick—if it's no harm to ask—Can we do anythin' ?"

"When the washin's over, man . . . When the washin's over . . ." And, his steps more pronounced, he crossed from the hearth to the table, where he turned, looking out the door. Then he moved to the dresser, still looking out . . . Then back to the window. And now the evening shades were congealing into shadow, and blears of reflection from the fire were dripping down the plates.

"Don't let the fire down, Tom . . . There's plenty more coals. Plenty." And as Tom replenished it : "More . . . More, man . . . !"

The latch of the room door clacked again ; and, in awe, the women were muttering, one as she inhaled.

"Lovely—Lovely—Aw, a lovely corp' . . ."

"Aw, isn't he—God rest him . . ."

"Let yous come up an' see him . . ."

After the Rosary, Patrick led them back to the kitchen and saw each seated before entering the other room. He returned with a quart bottle of whiskey and a fistful of glasses.

"No—No . . . I never lip it, Patrick," the women protested, slewing away from the extended glass.

The men protested, too.

In his grim way, Patrick said . "Will I have to baptise yous' with it . . . ?"

"Aw sure, God Almighty man . . . Ah, well . . . Lord 'a' mercy' on he's sowl . . ."

"Amen . . ." And he returned to the room.

As if by concert, they flung the whiskey into the ashes and, as he came back, pretended to be draining the glasses on their lips. He had his back to the fire now, huge and gnarled against the blaze, his legs apart, his hands clasped behind his back.

"I'll want to see MaGee the undertaker, Tom."

"The pony an' trap's for you, Patrick—Any time yeh say . . ."

He cleared his throat. "The women here—" He stopped, crossed to turn a mirror on the wall which the women had overlooked when they had stopped the clock, and resumed his stand. "The women here will see after the meals for the wake people."

"Amusha . . . God help yeh Patrick—Isn't it the poor obligation . . .?"

"You Ned . . . You could see after the wake . . .?"

"I will an' willin', Patrick . . ."

"For the two nights . . .?"

"Two nights, Patrick—?"

"An' why wouldn't there be two nights . . .? An' I'll want the bell rung for James, God relieve him of he's sins—This evenin' if at all. An' word must be got to the Speaker Lawless. It's neither my wish nor James' to have a man like Lar Brannigan insultin' people payin' their offerin's before the altar of God be callin' out their nicknames when it suits him. Ned? We could be doin' with more chairs . . ."

Tom was treated to a drink in the undertaker's kitchen, while MaGee and Patrick went into a room. The business occupied about half-an-hour. And it was Patrick himself who tottered out with the huge cardboard box to the trap; the kind of box one sees wake-articles packed in, the sticks of tobacco and pipes, the cheese and biscuits. And when they got home, Patrick insisted on carrying it into the room, where he kicked it under the bed.

In the early hours of the wake he sat at the side of the fire beside the bellows, rising only to take the hand of a newcomer and sympathiser. About ten o'clock he rose and stood at the table, facing the door, his hands behind his back. About a dozen people sat in the kitchen, half of them youngsters trying to smoke the clay pipes, and amusing those men who had got tired talking of land and work, of horses and cattle, the gossip of the parish, and the past glory of the Flynn's and the character of James, which they recounted when Patrick was out of earshot. It must have been one in the morning when Patrick returned to the fire.

"Was the bell rung for James?"

"It was then, Patrick—While yeh were in town. An' a long bell it was, too . . ."

His big underlip bulged. "'Coorse, that was late enough . . ."

"Well . . . it was then, Patrick. But sure . . . Who sits up at wakes now?"

He ignored the comment. All night he sat and watched the fire, till the dawn began to develop the silhouette of the window frame and the branch outside, while the branch, in the dawn breeze, groped for the star before it dimmed.

After James had been confined next day, the women persuaded him to throw himself on the other bed, and he did, snoring through the evening. But he was back in the chair at the fire by nightfall. The people who came to the wake-house were, for the most part, those who had sat up the previous night. As each newcomer entered, one or two would rise hurriedly, offering their seat although chairs were vacant, and then shuffle out in an embarrassed crouch. Standing at the table, Patrick saw them go . . . Then he was back at the fire, waiting for the dawn to come, when the house would empty except for a few women in the room.

The funeral was at three; but two hours before that time Patrick ordered two tables to be placed in the centre of the kitchen, end to end, and covered with white cloths from the drawers. Then the chairs were arranged, with a glass of whiskey and one of wine set on the table before each chair. Four big plates of biscuits and two of cheese were placed in a line down the tables. As soon as people began to collect he ordered Ned to bring them in, while he stood again before the door.

The women, as was customary, were in the room with the corpse, and they were invited first. But not once were all the chairs at the tables occupied. The women sat and, as was also customary, nibbled a biscuit or a bit of cheese, leaving the wine untouched. Then the men were brought in, to nibble a biscuit and cheese . . . and rise as if by concert.

Then Ned showed in a young man wearing a bright, tweed overcoat. He grasped Patrick's hand and said assuredly: "I'm sorry for your trouble, Patrick. Very sorry . . ."

Patrick looked straight into the other's eyes. "I know you—an' I don't know you . . ."

"You know Peter Tiffney—"

"Peter Tiffney! Peter Tiffney the cattle man—You're a son of his—The youngest?"

"The youngest, Patrick . . ."

Patrick still held the young man's hand, and his other one joined it. "An' how is Peter Tiffney?"

"Crippled with the pains, Patrick . . ."

"Do you tell me that. No dealin' at all?—Ah, sure he's too old now anyway . . ."

"It was only the other night he was talkin' of the droves himself an' you an' James, God be good to him, used to ship . . ."

"He was . . . He was indeed . . ." And Patrick nodded and let the hand go.

A few came in afterwards, but Patrick hardly saw them. Then Ned told him that the hearse had arrived.

"Already . . .?" His hand delved towards his vest pocket, and Ned saw the hand stiffen, saw the jowls quiver, then tremble. "Ah well . . . I suppose it is—I suppose it is." And he put his hands again behind his back. "But the people haven't gathered. We can't lift the corp' yet . . ."

MaGee himself had not come, but his foreman, who refused sulkily to be detained longer than a quarter of an hour. Ned brought in the platefuls of pipes from the ditch. Then he placed two chairs in the street to bear the coffin, and beckoned the pall-bearers, all cousins, people the name of Dunnes.

MaGee's foreman had a car, and Patrick rode with him to the chapel, behind the cortege. Again and again he twisted to look back. But no other trap had joined young Tiffney's. And when Patrick, alone with the priest on the altar, gazed down the chapel for the Speaker Lawless to rise from a seat, and wondering what was keeping him, a cocky wee man swung up the aisle. Patrick glowered. Then he tossed down a pound on the table.

"Patrick Flynn . . . One pound!" Brannigan cried.

Then, as was common, came the long pause, while they shuffled, looked down the chapel at the averted faces, then back at the table, waiting for someone to rise. Tiffney bounded from a seat at the back.

"Mr. Tiffney . . . Ten shillings!"

Going back Tiffney passed MaGee's man.

"Mr. MaGee . . . Five bob!"

The awkward pause came again, while men nudged one another and glanced sideways waiting for friends and well-wishers to earn the distinction of paying first—the scale of contribution

sliding as the degree of kindred extended. Suddenly, they rose in a body.

"Paddy Dunne . . . Two shillin's. Mick Dunne . . . Two shillin's. Eddy Dunne . . . Two bob. Boozer—Larry Dunne . . . Two bob . . ."

The offerings amounted to seven pounds ten.

Patrick stood beside the Flynn headstone during the burial, the high thrust of the cross almost censuring his stoop. An' the top of the cross was higher nor many a chapel roof he had seen in far away nooks in England an' Wales. The gilt had gone from the R, but the I.P. still gleamed. So did the great lettering of FLYNN. There would be just room enough for JAMES FLYNN, Their Son, Aged 76 . . . And now the spade and shovel were being slung in a cross over the grave and the people were kneeling in a last prayer . . .

Patrick was the last to rise. "Lord 'a' mercy on him . . . On him an' them . . ." he breathed. Next he invited everyone to the house, but could only persuade Ned, and Larry Dunne and a neighbour who had made the grave. They went in the car. In the house he saw them seated and ordered the women who had stayed behind (for it wasn't right to close a door on a funeral) to make tea. But they protested. To please him, to speed their getting away, all sat around the tables and nibbled biscuits. He was looking out at the gathering dusk, worn, not saying a word.

"It—It was a fine funeral anyway, Patrick."

"Few like it these days"

"Everyone remarked that . . ."

His reply, when it came, was a gasp. "It was a poor funeral . . . A poor funeral for a Flynn . . ."

When the dusk thickened, one went now, another again, mumbling of cattle to be fed. Patrick was alone by nightfall. Only one glass of whiskey had been emptied. He lit the lamp and looked at the pipes. Over three-quarters full the crock was. In the press, only three-quarters of a bottle gone. Patrick's jowls drooped, shaking violently. Then he grabbed a bottle and drank. Then seized a pipe and lit it, smoking greedily . . .

He was on the first bus next morning, and with MaGee as soon as he opened. He was taken into a room.

"My bill's ten quid, Patrick. That's as light as I dare go." He threw a jeweller's bill on the table. "Twelve quid for the two of them, Patrick. An' Mullen's a decent man."

"They're gold watches, Mr. MaGee. Neither James nor me had better. The best that money could buy."

"But they're old, Patrick—It's for the gold he's buyin' them—Ah here. On account o' the family. There's three quid back. An' I'll make up the parcel free."

"I'll want no parcel, Mr. MaGee. Just gimme a clear receipt."

"Dammit, Patrick—We're not goin' to fall out, are we? You'll take the tobacco an' the Baby Power off me—"

"A clear receipt, if yeh please, Mr. MaGee."

MaGee gave it to him.

"An' it'll be in *The Examiner*, Mr. MaGee—?"

"I'll see to that."

At the door, they shook hands. Patrick said hesitantly:

"You'll never breathe about the watches—"

"Patrick? For God's sake . . . What sort of a man do ye take me for . . . ?"

The stone-cutter who undertook to inscribe JAMES FLYNN on the headstone charged a pound. The bell-man would have to be paid. There were Masses to be paid for. And birth certificates . . . for the pension people. These would, he knew, show him to be four years over the age. But what odds—James was gone now. The Flynn's were gone.

On the way down the street he passed the bank which owned his farm. The Flynn's were gone . . . Over and over again the two bitter thoughts kept turning in his mind as he tottered, very stooped, towards the town Workhouse.

THE EXISTENTIALISM OF J. - P. SARTRE

By Arland Ussher

THE Teutonic tide, receding from stricken France, has left behind it the germ of a creed called Existentialism—a name formerly heard only in lecture-rooms, but which has begun to catch the attention of a humanity by now conscious of little, and demanding little, except bare Existence. The fact that its present professors are novelists—and novelists in

the French naturalistic tradition—seems to suggest that Philosophy has at last turned the key on the stuffy museum of Plato with its ranked statues of ideal abstractions, where no one went even on wet days, and on that portentous laboratory of Hegel with its rows of bottled solutions, where only specialists went, and has decided to take an airing in the streets and the fields. More exactly, Existentialism may be likened to the complex of feelings of the “new boy,” in a sphere where the familiar norms no longer rule, and where a multitude of alien existences make him, for the first time, shiveringly conscious of his own distinct entity. “It is in-and-by the revelation of my Objectivity for the Other that I apprehend the presence of his Subjectivity” (Sartre); this neatly reverses the traditional, idealist, conception whereby I become aware of my Subjectivity through my awareness of the World as my Object. The Existentialist, starting where the Cartesian left off, says in effect “I suffer, therefore there is something that is not I to cause my *malaise*. I am not merely a thought—I am a situation”; the rediscovery of Evil (“*le visqueux*”), as the principle of gravitation in human life, is giving back to philosophy a sense of tension, of *architecture*, which throughout an era of purely abstract—so to say, *musical*—systems it lacked. It might perhaps be said that each question in modern times has been raised by the English, clarified by the French, and answered wrongly by the Germans—answered, at least, in such a way as to raise new problems. It was so with the problem of the Not-Self, which was vaguely indicated by Bacon and the empiricists, attractively defined by Descartes and the rationalists, sweepingly solved by Hegel and the idealists; it may be so with the problem of the Self, which will surely be the study of the coming age—should any civilisation survive to study it. For we must admit today that the idealist answer was a wrong one—disastrous in divorce from that Self-knowledge which pre-Renascence man guarded in the tradition of an aboriginal guilt. The philosophy which reduces the world to the categories of Reason makes of it, in fact, a collection of machine-parts: an engine which the Super-technician, Man, can delude himself that he operates or disjoins and reassembles, exactly as he thinks his own thought, according to the far-from-precise laws of thesis, antithesis and synthesis—of rod, nut and screw. Everything is possible, and therefore nothing is real—for one thing has not more rationality than another. All is

Mind, and all is insanity—there is boundless Freedom, and there is no Freedom; nothing is more striking in the text-books of the last century than the alternating presentation of the universe as a heavenly choir and a “free-for-all.” Faced with this Abyss—this *Hakenkreuz* of a “Dialectic” sending out jagged clefts to infinity—an energetic race like the Germans or a primitive one like the Russians gazes into the Abyss till, as Nietzsche warned, “the Abyss gazes into them”—we see that twin progeny of Idealism, the Vitalism which partly produced fascism and the Materialism of Marx, for *all is possible*; while a more sophisticated race like the French tries to conceal the Abyss under a “romantic irony”, a readiness to “try everything”—even *la collaboration* for *nothing is real*. The pendulum and the pit—pure Power and utter Vacuum. The logical conclusion is the *crime gratuit* of André Gide, to realise the Vacuum; and a gratuitous war, a gratuitous race extermination, to sense the Power . . . It is significant that Jean-Paul Sartre, who is no transcendentalist but a dramatiser of the Vacuum lacking nothing of surrealist gloom, should have turned, relief, to the doctrine adumbrated in Lutheran-religious terms for by Hegel’s long-ignored critic, the Dane Kierkegaard. For Kierkegaard corrected the too-easy religious rationalism of Hegel by emphasising that the finite creature is fatedly unhappy, because in thrall to the Irrational and out of joint with Reality, and that he must be reintegrated in the Divine Reason by an equally “absurd” *Choice of the Self*—as it were a leap over the “abyss of possibility.” When Hegel said “I *am* insofar as I am at peace with myself” and “Realise yourself as an infinite whole”, Kierkegaard in substance replied “I *am* insofar as I realise my infinite and anguishing distance from the Infinite Whole”; and a similar reaction to German philosophy is implied in the Dantesque creation of Dostoievski. The Self, in other words, must win the objective Being-in-the-Whole of any brute or vegetable by renouncing its subjective day-dreaming *Existence-in-a-void-of-Will*; it must give up its “idealist”, conservative, Good and its “materialist”, rebel, Bad by accepting and acting on (not opportunist-wise but despairingly) a given situation; more truly than Engels knew, must it regain the freedom that is “knowledge of necessity”—by the rejection of the illusion of infinite choice, as does a youth when he enters on marriage. In such a doctrine the danger of mere servile “adaptation” in a totalitarian sense is evident—Did not Kierkegaard himself say that nature intended him for a police-spy? Did not Hitler sometimes parrot the

phraseology of Heidegger?—but its emphasis on “Self-choosing” suggests that it is itself a spy in the totalitarian, institutional, thought-world of the Continent. For us, of the English-speaking races, the Forerunner will probably be neither the Lutheran Kierkegaard nor the Orthodox Dostoievski, but that altar-builder to an Unknown God—D. H. Lawrence: Lawrence who also saw life as Self-creation by Will-renouncement, who hated the nihilist and yet more the idealist—but was not afraid to bespeak fair the *Diable au Corps* that dwells in the Abyss (which Kierkegaard turned his back on, which Dostoievski called “the fascination of Sodom”), who looked not to an Early Christian *Credo quia Absurdum* but to an almost Taoist receptivity for the influences of the natural world. We do not doubt that the French will clarify the question which the intuitive genius of Lawrence left, after all, big with the darkness of the Nottingham pits; that they will give the right answer seems to us less likely. For the Latins remain rationalists even in irrationalism—they will think always that to name an idea is to understand it, to pose a problem artistically the same thing as to answer it—and the next stage in mankind’s journey must be accomplished without the Baedeker of Logic and that Classical-Christian passport of the Word; even such a phrase as “the anguish of nonentity” has in it the danger of a conscious, histrionic, stoicism. The French, so often blamed for “animalism”, are in some ways the least animal-like of Europeans—their agonies, like their joys, are mind-born; and the new orientation must be an almost pre-human adjustment, in “fear and trembling”, to the norms of nature. From the little we can learn, the Existentialism of M. Sartre has not avoided taking a political—indeed a partisan—tinge; and politics (with logic, its parent) has been the bane of France, and—through France—of Europe. The “*s’engager*” of the intellectuals of the Resistance is as dangerous a rule as the “indifference” of Oriental mystics; it seems faintly ominous that M. Sartre (in *Les Mouches*) should have chosen Orestes for his hero. Is Europe indeed the House of Atreus? Will we always mix the *genres*, Pagliacci-like? Kierkegaard-Hamlet, Sartre-Sophocles—we have travelled far from the Voltairean commonsense of “*Cultiver le jardin*”! For the first time since the Greek, the cry is heard that “Not to have lived is best”; but this, which is the conclusion of weak thinkers, is no more than the first premiss of the strong. Here is—perhaps—the difference between a Sartre and such as Céline.

CHARLES WEEKES

By John Eglinton

CHARLES WEEKES, known to those specially interested in Irish literature as the author of two small books of verse, died in London last January in his 79th year. He had been for many years the secretary and legal adviser of a large electrical company and had lost all connection with Ireland; yet it is possible that but for him the "Irish Literary Movement" in its early years might have taken a somewhat different turn. How well I remember one day in the early 'nineties when, sitting with him above the cliff-walk in Howth, he pointed out to me a tall young man passing in eager conversation with a friend, and exclaimed "There's George Russell!" Soon after this we became a triumvirate of intimates, taking long walks out of Kingstown, in the neighbourhood of which we all lived. Russell in those days was subject to long fits of silent depression, and I remember one of these fits breaking up one day in Dalkey with a wan smile on his face when Weekes dubbed him "Empedocles on Sorrento"; but he was of course the voluble member of our company, and listening to him pouring forth his verses, Weekes silently conceived a design which was to have interesting and even memorable results in Irish literature. He would turn publisher. But first he had to persuade Russell to deviate from the secret path of his spiritual calling and to yield to the vanity of authorship. I was not present when he brought his full blandishments as a tempter to bear on Russell's hesitation, but I remember the satisfaction with which he at length announced to me that Russell had consented. He took a little room in Dawson Chambers and set up as a publisher under the name of Whaley, which he found in his family pedigree. He was nothing if not business-like, and fitted up the office neatly; he even modified his costume in accordance with his notion of what a publisher should look like, adopting a remarkable broad-brimmed hat which he said he wore to "decimate his acquaintance." His taste in book-production was excellent; nothing less than the Chiswick Press would satisfy him; and he had his reward when, in 1894, he brought out his first book, *Homeward: Songs by the Way*. The demand for it began at once, and it is hardly too much to say that with Æ as a stirring recruit Irish literature now assumed the character of a "movement." There were some further publications, and the firm of Whaley might have grown

into considerable importance (it was a convincing indication of the general interest that Mahaffy one day left his card at the office) ; Weekes however was losing money, and suddenly deciding that he had had enough of publishing went over to London, where he lived thenceforth in ever-increasing detachment from his old life.

He was himself already an author, having anticipated Russell by producing a volume of verse, *Reflections and Refractions*, published by Fisher Unwin in 1893, which he had almost immediately withdrawn. Why he had done so was a puzzle to his friends, for the book was, if not a triumphant, a sufficient answer to the discouraging remark of Claude Wright, a theosophic friend who made a practice of telling people what he conceived to be the truth about themselves : " You can't be a poet, Weekes, for you haven't got red hair ! " The book had been noticed not unfavourably, and some of the shorter poems have become fairly familiar in anthologies. I liked one specially, beginning :

" What matter where the great God flings
Down on earth's floor thy thinking clay,
If thou can'st rise and live today
The life of emperors and kings ! "

His title had seemed to forestall the charge of imitateness, yet he winced particularly at the phrase of one reviewer who described the principal poem in the volume, " Louis Verger : being some sensations of an assassin," as the " best imitation of Browning " he had seen. Looking through the poems now I can understand his action in recalling them. We cannot impose on ourselves when we imitate : our individuality soon makes its claim, and rejects the vicarious expression of thought and feeling. One poem in his own manner may be quoted :

" Just to bite that apple once—
Just to kiss that mouth of her's—
Just to breathe the upper airs—
Do it. Don't remain life's dunce.

" Do it. Never mind the cost ;
For the gods take care of you
In the end. At least 'tis true
The devil takes the hindermost.

“ Therefore, whatsoe’er it is,
 Smite for it, strive upward—give
 That sweet mouth your kiss and live,
 Lest God spue you out of his.”

I think he would have liked to recall, though for different reasons, another small book of verse published later in Dublin, *About Women* (1907).

Weekes was a rather undersized pleasant-faced man, with a large head and imposing forehead. He was witty and humorous and enlivened any company in which he found himself. He was understood to be preparing for the bar, but seemed to have plenty of time on his hands, and when I proposed to go to Göttingen to learn German he decided to accompany me—not to the great advantage of my progress in the language. Fishing and shooting were his pastimes, but having been drawn into the serious group of the Dublin Theosophists he was looked upon as a crank by his legal and sporting friends. He had jested, not overawed or greatly impressed, with Madame Blavatzky in London, and when I began to know him well had found in Matthew Arnold the beloved master to whom he was thenceforth to remain faithful. He was still devoted to Russell, and there was really something beautiful and characteristic of Weekes in the self-forgetfulness with which, after his own disappointment, he applied himself to the establishment of Russell’s reputation as a poet. When he went over to London he formed further intimacies with poets—Lionel Johnson, Binyon, and others—and continued to write verses himself all his life. He left a considerable mass of them in MS., and there are also two short one-act plays, of which one appears to have been staged somewhere quite successfully. The verses commemorate trout-stream adventures, encounters and experiences requiring in most cases some elucidation. Here, as an example, is an exclamation called forth by a sudden apparition in a London street :

“ Am I going blind ?
 Are all things at an end ?
 Is the eternal firmament falling in ?
 O you, there, on the soot-fouled leafless tree
 Of the morne and arid square
 In the middle of East London,

The blood-tinge on your neck,
With the infallible necklet
And the bars on your wings—
Strong flyer,
Clatterer through the spruces,
Haunter of dark midsummer woods,
Watcher of the wheat fields :
God in heaven,
What are you doing here ? ”

Weekes's publishing experiment had been tried before in Ireland, and has been tried since, but it has always happened that when an Irish author has produced a marketable work he has received tempting offers from London or New York, thus discovering that there is some flaw in the claim of Ireland to a self-contained and self-supporting literature in the English language. It almost looks as if Irish literature should be kept within a certain limit of excellence in order to maintain a separate existence. If the contribution of Ireland to what is called English literature could be estimated in financial terms, fantastic claims to compensation might be clamoured for ; but the truth is that it is as impossible to vest in Ireland the exclusive ownership of Yeats or Goldsmith as to determine the exact locality of Sweet Auburn or Innisfree. The claims of Ireland in the world of thought and imagination extend far beyond its political claims, though the claims of the Irish language are in fairly close correspondence with the latter. It is possible to believe that in an Ireland of assured prosperity and happiness a publishing centre might be established which would attract Irish authors from all over the world ; particularly if a comparatively rich Ireland were set over against an impoverished England ; but a development of this kind seems hardly in the line of present Irish political and cultural aspirations. It was different in Weekes's time, when Irish literature was satisfied with the part assigned to the Celtic element in English literature by Matthew Arnold. Ireland apparently now aspires to keep its secret of “ natural magic ” locked up in the casket of its ancient language.

It may be that in Ireland a distinction is recognized between the hundred-per-cent Irishman who can talk Gaelic and the Irishman who has a taste for being a citizen of the world. But this distinction is not recognized outside Ireland. There is a

type, or rather there are types, of men and women favourably known everywhere as Irish. A dash of Irish blood is sufficient, and improves the Englishman as much, to tell the truth, as the Irishman is improved by some admixture of his blood from foreign sources. English romance-writers are fond of attributing a strain of Irish descent to their heroines. These two races indeed blend so well together that they were surely intended to dwell together in some kind of partnership and cooperation. And yet the Irishman in England always feels a certain detachment from the life around him. Stephen MacKenna, for instance, who came to like the English ways and would not return to Ireland, used to say that he always felt that he was a foreigner in England. Weekes, again, seemed to me to have become the complete Englishman, in politics, in patriotism, and even in his slight snobbishness ; yet one who knew him best surprised me once by saying that he "had the terrible pride that all Irishmen seem to have." Whether Mr. De Valera likes it or not, the typical Irishman all over the world is not the sometimes rather dour devotee of the Irish language, but (using the term to denote the Irishman of mixed descent) the Anglo-Irishman, often witty and humourous, detached in spirit but adaptable in cooperation, and with an agreeable unexpectedness in his opinions and character.

AS THE LIGHT TERRIBLE AND HOLY

II.

By Leslie Daiken

OCTOBER, The Falling Leaf Moon, month of fees and finals, moon of deadlock. Siggie Watters, moocher and chronic medical student, awoke and it was Thursday. Already the buzzbuzz of Uncle Velvel's morning performance in the parlour, ricocheting through the passages and rooms like the dawn-song of a muezzin hailing the birth of another day, reminded him that it was no common-or-garden Thursday, but the *Rosh Ha-shannah*, when a guy is expected to add his mumbo-jumbo to the murmurous drone of prayer, parrotwork in which most of the words were gabbled and half of the meaning unknown. If only they'd let you sleep during the daytime, then the night could be killed by games of pontoon, poker, or Hunt the Bobba.

But little rest, like pocket-money, was allotted to this hard-thinking loafer of an Old House!

He heard the hall-door clapping faintly downstairs as the old man uncoiled himself from that atmosphere which was part and parcel of the parlour, mouldy prayer books bound in veined boards, old snuff boxes, *tfillim* in their velvet pouch, smelling salts, housecaps of black plush. Only, thought the curate of many clinics, scraping his scalp under its mop of ginger curls, and letting his eyes rove over, before taking in, the blue roses branded on the wall-paper and the homeliness of a grubby towel slung across his navy trousers on the back of a chair: only, why did they HAVE to begin so goddamned early in the morning? Ach, "arra custom is custom," as the lads put it; and an Old House was the pride of the Almighty as his Uncle put it; and anyway you weren't going to argue with the old people, especially since it was the Uncle who gave you half-a-dollar every Sunday, the only bit of cash-in-hand that was to steer you through the network of coffees, small-bets, fares, and the score of titbits which sundered the tedium of workaday weeks. Had he not spent three years, amounting to nine whole terms, labouring on a system by which you could get from Sally's Bridge on the Canal to Lincoln Place by devious laneways; shortcut streets and lesser-used bypasses so as to evade that confraternity of petty creditors obnoxiously classified as "Mad Dogs"? (A Mad Dog Never Barks, was the battlecry of his pals). Was not such a thesis in topographical research proof positive of, and tribute enough to, his industry and initiative? And yet, there was Shmerel, good-boy-turned-bad-boy, having all the cushy breaks, dining with jazz-song writers and sleeping with croonerettes . . .

Some fellas adopted dangerous ways of raising the wind. And these by the self-righteous were described as "tramps." In Swansea, where dwelt his cousins, chaps of no defined vocation were dismissed as "loafers", or more peculiarly, as "low-lifers." But in Dublin, unique in verbiage, the equivalent term of opprobrium was "tramps", or sometimes, "Shaygets" . . . Well, he would join the colony of the good-for-nothings, more power to them for getting easy money, be sworn-in to the brotherhood of gamblers, and be damned to the Respectable Ones, the cut-throat *balabattim* who dared to whisper those legion names only in undertones, hushing the voice as when was mentioned

the name of some neighbour that was expecting a baby ; and then only on special occasions, such as the acme of a family scene, or a drama of *shabbos*-breaking or late-night-keeping, when their unmentionable names were drawn out as terrible examples,—unhallowed catagory of “ boys who have taken the wrong road.”

The wrong road ! Hadn't Sammy Sitman fecked the silver candelabra from his own home and the Lad Lane police taken him in charge ? Hadn't Fatser Goldberg a pocket full of brass that he pinched regularly from the till in his Da's stores ? And Micko Marks—Hadn't Micko flogged his dress-suit the minute after his sister's wedding ceremony, enabling him to stand the lads pickled-beef sandwiches and single-chips in the Delicatessen, every day for a whole week—let alone the trips out to Merrion Strand for a buckshee coort ? Not to mention the extortions made in the name of exams to be passed and grinds to be defrayed. And Len, oh yes, sweet angel-faced Len with the refoined accent and the look as if butter wouldn't melt in his gob,—didn't Len pick the lock of his grand-daddy's garage every other night, and off with him in the Dodge saloon (lately acquired by that venerable doyen of the stock-broking world) in which to vindicate his carnal appetites at the expense of the elastic comforts of some miserable little piece of goods from The Barn ? . . . “ Takin' out wimmin,” he called it !

But why pick on all that ? A time would come for all that. One day he'd qualify. And then—Maybe he would show 'em yet. Still, another stick at midder would decide the issue . . . “ You must think we've got already one black sheep in the family—and take an example, Siggie,” his Uncle's cronies had admonished him in tones half a threat, half a shmooze. “ Remember what Doctor Heatherstein said to you in your *Bar Mitzvah* speech : ‘ Be a credit to the communita ’ . . . ” “ Credit ” was the ticket ! He could picture them now, in solemn conclave in the vestry room perhaps, doing a post-mortem on HIS career, HIS character, HIS marriage prospects. And him getting a measely two and a tanner a week.

Saints alive, was there NO justice ! And the blessed poultry ! What a fight to be spared the responsibility of taking chickens, their legs manacled with Uncle Velvel's bits of bootlace, croaking in a wicker basket, to the *Shochet*. That menial task had only recently been passed on to his younger brother, Yankel. Yes, study-

ing doctor did not permit of such degrading labour. For was not his the province of ulcers, opening boils, treating gonorrhea, heart disease, and not the mucky surgery of slitting the throats of the family livestock. Although, he remembered with a twinge of humiliation, that when Yankel was out collecting weekly payments from the Uncle's sparetime clientele, he dared not refuse an inexorable bidding to deputise for the bally little *mamzer*.

* * * * *

Siggie, testing the daylight temperature with a daring big-toe, decided that it was uncongenial and withdrew it in under the blankets in company with freckled forearm, hands and jaw. He allowed himself just sufficient nose-room to breathe, and eye-room to watch a group of swans digging their eel-like necks under the greenish smoothly-flowing waters of the canal that passed under Sally's Bridge at the foot of the hen-infested back-yard. Unchanging, sluggish waterway bearing flat barges with fine oriental lassitude to discharge their cargoes of brown turf at the lock-harbours.

"It's disgraceful, shockin' altogether, that's what." Liam Lazarus had said during a game of cards, "what's the sense of working at midder at all, if you don't get a decent lump of guino for Bank Holiday weekend. You might as well be back in the old rag-and-bone store and gettin' a regular screw. You never have a tosser, exceptin' your half-dollar-a-week. What in the name of hell's blazes can you do with half a bleddy dollar a week?" Liam was right as rain, of course. What COULD a fella do with even a round dollar a week? Snooker was out. Janes—not the right sort. Race meetings—a faraway dream. He had to steer clear of all the existing places freed from the sledge-hammer of interference falling on the anvil of criticism—or become eternally a scrounger, a lad-on-the-tap. And that prospect tore at his vitals. Too many Mad Dogs foul the sport. No, it was entirely a matter of honour, that much was clear, and honour was spelt with L.S.D. Yet, how? How to get rich quick—that was the bleddy question. THAT was a killer.

Better a coupla quid slaving your guts out in Mr. Gatka's tailoring shop. Gatka—snake-faced, parrot-nosed, rat-eyed Gatka the Shneider, meanest and mealiest-mouthed man in the United Kingdom, with his pious grin and his talmud quotations between deals of bare-faced robbery, and he nodding and whispering to the Old Man about Siggie ending up by marrying a *shiksa* . . .

Marrying a *shiksa* ! Ho-ho, he'd have to show his mettle. Yes, Liam Lape-ka Lazarus was right. Now or never was the size of it.

Hastily, with a touch of defiance, Siggie peeled off the bed-clothes, dressed, slipped down to the parlour, opened the cabinet drawer where his *Bar Mitzvah* presents were kept for show ; useless trinkets and silver matchboxes to hang from Victorian fobs, and a few gold links and studs and pins. Grabbing the smallest of the articles he pocketed them and approached the bookcase. From a central shelf he took down a fine tome, impressively bound in leather, entitled "The Zohar"—a cabbalistic commentary inspired by the Pentateuch. Holding open the soft, padded sides of the volume he seemed to see once again the Rabbi's hands, plucked from their kid-gloves, caressing the gilt-edged leaves with a fantastic tenderness. Hands, frail and yellow as a wax doll's, wary and blue-veined :

"This, my dear boy, this is the most priceless of all your presents. This wonderful treasure, The Zohar." He left

carrying it under his arm as though making for a House of Prayer, but feeling like one who, after sleepless consideration, resolves to forswear his faith, Siggie walked along the towpath till he came to Portobello Bridge. The familiar early-morning whiff from the knacker's, reminiscent of high gorgonzola, quickened the heavy autumn dampness. He dodged into an alley and pushed his way through the swing doors of a pawn-office, situated on the bank of the self-same sluggish waterway.

Inside, a group of women pressed up against the counter with an air of urgency. Some of them carried big bundles wrapped in limp, grey, ragged cloths. They all wore shawls. Siggie looked to left and to right, puzzled.

"Hooch up, will yiz, for the love a gawd, and make rewem for the young genel-man," called out the one nearest to him.

"Is it all day, ye're goin' to kape us here, Willie?" said another to an assistant rooting around at the uppermost end of the counter. Above him were shelves packed with dusty brown-paper packets. On neighbouring shelves were all sorts or ornaments, china spaniels, mugs, vases, gilded plaster statues of the Christ child. Beside them again were silver trophy cups, brazen candlesticks, table-silver, trays, gadgets galore, and a big melodeon with two rows of button-keys. Nearer the window

were show cases like in any jeweller's shop where medals, watches and such-like smaller pieces were displayed on black velvet trays.

From the far corner hopped-up an assistant and came over to the auld-one, staring her fixedly, and showing a mouth brown with bad teeth and hissed at her :

"Ye'll wait yer turren, ma'am, or yeh can hump off with yerself owa dis. Nobody's axin' yeh to stay here agin yer will."

A chuckle of crazy giggles came from the rest of the women. One, grinning, said : "Howld yer hair on, Willie, there's no call for to be losin' yer rag wid the lady", while the victim of his attack fiddled with the cloth wrapping on her bundle, patting it nervously with her thin hands.

"Yeh have yer glue," she mumbled.

The Man With The Bad Teeth drew across the counter a packet of cotton fabrics from one of the customers, and ran his hands through their clean, newly-washed folds.

"How much on these?" he jerked.

"Seven and a tanner, please, Willie," responded the woman.

"Seven-an-six, household articles," echoed the assistant, turning his head in the direction of the show-case where another man sat on a high stool writing away at a tall desk. He wrote with a goosequill pen. "And the name is—?" he queried.

"Kelly," replied the woman.

"And the name is—Kelly," sang out the Man With The Bad Teeth as he extracted a pin from his lapel, pinned up the packet and placed it under the counter. Mechanically he drew-in the parcel carried by the woman next in line, opened it, examined a heavy pair of hobnailed boots, scrutinising the leather of the heels and soles, before re-wrapping them up in their paper.

"One pair men's boots five shillings," he informed the Man With The Pen, "and the name is—?", turning to the customer.

"For the luvva Mary, gimme the usual ten on them. The same as last week. I always get ten on them, Willie. Right well yeh know it."

"Five bob I'll lend yeh—the worth of them, an' yeh can take it or leave it, ma'am."

"Ah, he's cuttin' me, he's cuttin' me, the rip," moaned the woman.

"C'mon, don't be holdin' up the shop. Are yeh goin' to take it or not? Right! And the name is—Kenny."

He dropped his voice to a lower register. "Boots don't get

any newer walkin' to bona-fides"—he laughed sourly,—“do they, Harry?”

The Man With The Pen was lifting a thing like a canister and poured a sandy powder onto his documents. He took up a docket and handed it to The Man With The Bad Teeth who looked at it, called out the name Kelly, and taking from the drawer in the desk three half crowns, gave it to the first woman. She grinned, said: “Ta-ta, Willie, son,” and left the office.

“Next, please!” rapped out the assistant. A younger woman leaned across the counter and whispered to him. He said:

“I’m sorry, missus, I can’t do it. Boss’s orders. I would if I could.” She glanced at him sadly and went out. Another woman with tremendous breasts moved-up into her place and heaved onto the counter a pile of folded blankets, sheets and a pink linen coverlet.

“How much?”

“Twelve bob.”

“Twelve bob blankets etcetera. And the name is—?”

“Cummins.”

“And the name is Cummins.”

“It’s a wonder he didn’t cut you as well, the bloody gilla-teener,” came from the doorway as Mrs. Kenny disappeared from view.

“I’ll remember that,” hissed the Man With The Bad Teeth, “Impudence never helped a body in THIS place.”

Another docket arrived and was duly handed plus cash to its rightful client. Followed several more transactions and Siggie was filling the place in front of the assistant.

“Now, Sir,” said the assistant briskly. He handed across the counter the priceless volume. The assistant quizzed and knitted his brows as he tried to fathom the mysterious title.

“Z-O-H-A-R,” he drawled. “Them’s foreign. I’m afraid it’s no use to us. Have yeh no medical bukes or the like, that I can lend yeh something on?”

“No, I’ve nothing so valuable as this,” Siggie challenged. “This book is priceless, and that’s an expert’s opinion. Anybody can see it is.”

“Begor an it may be priceless to the likes of them who go in for that stuff, but it’s not a ha’p’orth value to us.” Out came the six little jeweller’s boxes from Siggie’s pocket. The assistant eyed them keenly and opened them one by one. He lifted the matchboxes from their beds of cotton-wool till they shone in

the watery autumn sunlight. Applying a magnifying glass to his eye he stared at the engraved Hebrew lettering.

"Them's more like it. These yer own?"

"Shure," he ventured, trying to look cocky.

"How much do yeh want on them?"

"A pound will do." Siggie, at the prospect of handling such a sum in a minute's time, imagined his request as being either fabulous or contemptuously low.

"One pound six articles in all; three medals, three amulets," he announced to The Man With The Pen, "And the name is—?"

"Walton," replied Siggie. "W-a-l-t-o-n," he spelt it.

"And the name is—Walton W-a-l-t-o-n." He mimicked the spelling.

The writing assistant sprinkled a docket with sand and brought it over to Willie. Willie waved it in the air and gave it to Siggie. Producing a new pound note he gave him that, too. Siggie folded the note inside the docket and noticed that he had fingered the ink into a purple smudge grained with light sand. "Thank you," he said as nonchalantly as he could.

With a priceless sacred book under his arm, Siggie Watters, moocher and chronic medico, walked out into the lane, rounded a corner, piloted himself through his private labyrinthine runways towards the heart of the seat of learning and the living-quarters of his butty, one Peter Considine, what time the Shofar was sounding most solemn of all notes—

THE GREAT TEK'IAH

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal

MUIREANN AGUS AN PRIONNSA. Amharclann na Mainistreach.

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER. By Kaufman and Hart. Dublin Gate Theatre.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE. By William Shakespeare. Gaiety Theatre.

THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS. By Norman Nicholson. Faber & Faber.

6s. net.

THIS WAY TO THE TOMB. By Ronald Duncan. Faber & Faber. 6s. net.

A very sketchy knowledge of the language did not prevent my enjoyment of the pantomime presented uniquely in Irish at the Abbey Theatre, and judging by its long run at least an equal ignorance did not interfere with its enjoyment by large numbers of the population. Based on a legend popularised by Lady

Gregory, and also obviously on a play in Irish on the same subject by Liam O'Briain, this production allows itself a freedom in the treatment of time which, by tradition, required no philosophical backing from Dunne nor the support of Henry James or Priestley precedents.

We move easily from the prehistoric periods that inspired the Anglo-Irish renaissance to a land wherein the birds of the air have human voices to the Moore Street mart of to-day, where shawled women sing like raucous birds. We move even more easily from the castle of the Ard Ri to Arus an Uachtaran in the Phoenix Park. There were songs (as there were saws) ancient and modern, or rather traditional and transatlantic. The latter were quite startling in their unexpectedness. It was, at first, a shock to hear "Kalamazoo" crooned in Connaught Irish as a belated contribution to the popularisation of the language. In the end one must accept the power of the wireless and the weakness of the fleshy ear to resist the swing Lorelei and boldly face the situation that it is easier to sing an unfamiliar language than speak it. Harness the people's living melodies, or, if you will, cacophonies to the national speech and the words spring to life if not to significance. There is no real loss of status. I remember hearing, after the first world war, German marching songs sung to Hebrew words in the streets of Tel-Aviv, and the language of the Old Testament is at least as dignified as that of the Táin Bó Cuailnge.

The acting was better than the singing, but the outstanding triumph of the evening was the step-dancing of the pantomime horse. Fore and hind legs blended in the familiar rhythm of the dance in all sorts of incredible positions, whilst a hundred medals danced with them on the proud equestrian chest. Here was fun where fun is rarely found. For does not one associate a grim unsmiling face and hanging rigid arms with this national dance as practised with deadly serious feet in the feiseanna throughout the country?

If the Morality play is rare nowadays, the play with a moral is even more so. The preacher may only harangue a congregation of the converted unless he be Shaw demonstrating a paradox from his stage pulpit. Thus it comes about that the tired high stool squatter, preferring the wisecrack to the wiseacre, sat back to laugh happily at *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, revived by the Gate Theatre Co. Here was no moralising, but farcical improbabilities taken at sky-master speed. The play begins with a leg break that has no relation to the fields of Eton, and the fractious fractured Sheridan Whiteside (Hilton Edwards), settling himself into an invalid chair in this chance house of refuge, behaves less like a sportsman than a misbegotten god out of the American machine who believes he can settle every problem with a columnist's crack. We have no widely popular broadcasters, no omnipotent columnists that we can lionise in this country, but we have been made sufficiently aware of social usage in the U.S.A. through the cinema to appreciate the important part played by such a character as figures in this piece in the American social scheme.

Hilton Edwards was not content with being lionised, he decided that he should look leonine in addition—a happy thought. He captivates his audience just as he overwhelms his chance hosts by his personality. The amusement, however, is provided by situation rather than characterisation. This is an easy recipe in the skilled hands of the artificer of entertainment for crowded stalls and large gullible galleries. It does not even seem to be necessary to be convincing in

the bringing about of a situation provided the laugh is achieved. The one on which the whole action depends can only be brought about by the introduction of a doctor who knows so little of his profession that he diagnoses a fracture where there is none. Perhaps the authors were only carrying on the Molière tradition handed down to G.B.S. in the baiting of the G.P. Perhaps, too, we are expected to believe that the doctor's interest in literature explains his medical inefficiency, and may be a warning to our aesthetic medicos to make up their minds about the calling they intend to follow. The play ends, as it begins, with a fracture. It has been served up to us like a whiteing with its tail in its mouth, the farce has run full circle.

"Let me not," said Hazlitt, "be admitted to an actor's dressing-room. Let me not see how Cato painted, or how Cæsar combed. Let me not meet the prompt-boys in the passage . . . nor hear the creaking of machines . . . nor overlook the fellow who holds the candle for the moon in the scene between Lorenzo and Jessica." Hilton Edwards, as producer, is aware that an audience of to-day does not wish to pry into the wings, preferring to accept the conventions of the stage that it may believe for a few hours in the actuality of the drama playing itself out on the proscenium. He knows too, however, that since Hazlitt's day the public has been taught to take an interest in actors' hobbies, in back-stage contraptions and the whole mechanics of production, so that any mystery connected with production is no longer in itself an aid to illusion. Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice*, as played in the Gaiety Theatre, props and furniture for the changing of a scene are boldly moved in full view of the audience. The movement, however, is effected to the accompaniment of the music of Scarlatti and Frescobaldi, and with the aid of Harlequin and Pantaloon, Punchinello and pierrots who dance through what might otherwise have been a dull dropped curtain.

The 18th century setting of the play was a bright inspiration, and did not need the apologetic note in the programme. The carnival roysterers, who burst into their wildest dance at the moment that Shylock discovers that his daughter has abandoned him, that she is thief as well as renegade, overwhelm the unfortunate man who is dragged, a pathetic figure, into the chain of whirling dancers, finally leaving him dazed and prostrate as they move on. This scene alone would have justified the setting.

Hilton Edwards's Shylock was a mature piece of acting. It was thought out to the last gesture. The purposeful omission by the distracted father of the kissing of the holy parchment on the doorstep in his frantic search for Jessica, the not too markedly foreign accent, the restrained passion overlaid by the logic of the "Hath not a Jew eyes" speech, the even more terrifying sharpening of the knife because underplayed, the undertone of dignity in the final abasement—all made this Shylock a memorable one and worthy to rank with the best I have seen.

The play, whose background was only moved forward one century, had an uncanny actuality which was helped by Shylock's yellow badge on his arm. In ancient Venice the red cap was the Jewish badge, but a yellow six-pointed star was the Nazi mark only a year ago. *Hamlet* has been successfully played in modern dress, but the play under review would have had an even greater poignancy in a present day setting. The legal quibbling, in what is in any case

an absurd Court scene with its fantastically harsh sentence, would have been quite convincing, for the Jew had not a chance, if it took place in a Nazi People's Court.

Of the other actors, Ginette Waddell's Portia, traditionally soubrettish, Sally Travers's charmingly skittish Nerissa, Liam Gaffney's Antonio, livening with his sincerity the intrinsic dullness of the character, and Wilfred Brambell's energetic young Gobbo were easily best.

A little while ago Mr. Martin Browne ran a season of verse plays at the Mercury Theatre, London. They were new plays, and since travel is difficult these days it was welcome to see two of the productions in book form. The theme of *The Old Man of the Mountains* is biblical, but the background is the author's native Cumberland. Elijah, a statesman farmer, triumphs over Ahab, a land-owner. But this is no Morality battle between demon and saint. Elijah is rather inclined to rest on his laurels when God responds to his prayer for rain, but the practical Ahab persuades his rival to join him in a scheme to catch the rain and store it against another drought. Just as Austin Clarke put words in the beak of the Crow in his lyric play for the air, so Mr. Nicholson gives an important part to the Raven:

Only the curlews are my companions; only the sound
Of the wind in the bare birches can reach me through the wide air,
Not the bleat of lambs, nor the speech of man, not
The gossiping of water, for the becks are frozen here.

The Beck speaks, too, with three women's voices and an Anna Livia accent:

We are the voices of the beck.
Bouncing over cobbles, hobbling over ferns;
Bubbling, babbling, chittering and chattering,
Diddering, doddering, spluttering and spluttering

But this play must be read if it can't be heard.

This Way to the Tomb is livelier than its title. Mr. Ronald Duncan's piece is in two parts—Masque and Anti-masque. Let the Announcer tell you its substance:

The former focuses on the past,
The latter looks at the mere present
And what the whole reflects is as permanent
As loose words are, fitted to the hoof of time

The poet dedicates this Masque
To Benjamin Jonson—and the Director of Television.
The Time: the fourteenth century; and the Place:
The Island of Zante, which is near to Thrace.
Here St. Antony, recent Abbot of Santa Ferrata
Lived as a hermit
With three young novices

As well as poetry you will find here wit and satire, the latter at the expense of the modern materialist, and perhaps a little overdone. I should certainly recommend it to our own Lyric Theatre for production in Dublin.

FRANCIS MACNAMARA: An Appreciation

By Arland Ussher

IN Francis Macnamara Ireland loses one of those brilliant figures of which she has thrown up a few in every age—who have often given the impression of greatness *manquée*, just as many visitors have felt Ireland to be a great nation *manquée*. For me, I confess, Francis was more than a *manqué*—his life had a unity of texture which made particular achievements somehow unimportant; more than anyone I have met, he did not so much appear to *avoid* the cliché and the common in word and act as not to be concerned with them. Those who knew him only in his last years of chronic suffering can form but a poor notion of the poet, thinker, wit, dandy, yachtsman and chef, whose life circled between Chelsea, Galway Bay, and a seclusion in which he worked at a grandiose synthesis of philosophy and economics. He had a cult for namesakes, and once wrote a sequence of poems around Francis of Assisi, Francis Villon, Francis Valois, and Francis Drake—in whom he saw different facets of the universality which he admired; and in truth one felt in him the possibility, not merely of many rôles—like an actor—but of many men. Freudians might also see in his preoccupation with Henry VIII (whose letters he edited) a romanticisation of the paternal namesake, Henry Macnamara, of whom he liked to quote the Irish phrase for blustering high-spirits, that “if he took your head off to-day he would put two on you to-morrow.” I did not share his enthusiasm for King Hal, and it seemed to me that Macnamara’s tapestries of thought left out the dark thread of the Irrational, as in his economics he was blind to the dynamism of *Gross-industrie*. The Preface he wrote to Balzac’s “Physiology of Marriage” was a brilliant but rather bizarre attempt to educe a theory of the sexes from that genteel and dated book. He had, perhaps, been born at the wrong time to make discovery of the continent of the Subconscious (his interesting interpretation of Dante is vitiated by this flaw), and his Cosmos had rather a look of having been created on the playing-fields of Harrow. But he was always, and in all he did, an artist; and he was one of the small company of artist-mystics in seeing that Existence can only be judged and absolved esthetically. However, by most (perhaps) of his acquaintance the artist and philosopher in Francis were scarcely suspected, except in the sense in which Norman Douglas has declared a good cook to be their perfect blend; he had a somewhat English contempt for mere “intellectuals,” together with an intellect too dogmatic to be English. His rich sense of life was always dragging him from the inkstand; and he put into the building of a new model of the Galway hooker, or into the conversion of Ennistymon House to a hotel that has become a fable, a truly intellectual energy. A German friend compared his dying in a beautiful but unfinished and unfurnished house in Dalkey to Tolstoi’s death in a railway-station. In a less distracted age, his many-sided talent would surely have won for him—as the phrase is—“a niche in the Temple of Fame.” Perhaps one cannot better sum up his uncommon quality than by saying that he never for a moment thought about such a thing.

BOOK REVIEWS

FOR THE TIME BEING. By W. H. Auden. Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.

The full titles of the two long poems which make up Mr. Auden's book are "The Sea and The Mirror: A Commentary on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*," and "For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio." The commentary consists of more than a dozen separate poems, spoken by The Stage Manager to the Audience, by Prospero to Ariel, by the Members of The Supporting Cast and by Ariel to Caliban. In each Auden displays, delightedly and delightfully, his skill in managing a different verse-form, using accentual, quantitative or syllabic measures, using straight rhyme, or no rhyme, or vowel or consonantal assonance, with the same "virtuoso ease," whether it be Prospero's sprung rhythm:—

"But now all these heavy books are no use to me any more, for

Where I go words carry no weight: it is best,

Then, I surrender their fascinating counsel

To the silent dissolution of the sea."

or Antonio's *terza rima*, or Gonzalo's rhymed trochaics, or the ballad of the Master and Boatswain:—

"The nightingales are sobbing in

The orchards of our mothers

And hearts that we broke long ago

Have long been breaking others;

Tears are round, the sea is deep:

Roll them overboard and sleep."

There is also a long address by Caliban, witty, ironic, profound by suggestion if not by statement, written in a prose which delights by the clarity and freshness of individual image or illustration as much as it irritates by its refusal to say what it means and its wilfully intrusive parentheses. The author's name is a guarantee of moralising intention and the poem seems to play round the central idea of peace through resignation, suggested by the retirement of Prospero and Shakespeare from their magic. The idea is carried to the borders of the philosophy of salvation through sacrifice—sacrifice here, of illusion, of desire without achievement, of acceptance without vision, of even the socialist Utopia of youth. Stripped of the day's pretences, even to the revelation of ugliness and evil, man may yet save himself by self-knowledge:—

"O blest be bleak Exposure, on whose sword,

Caught unawares, we prick ourselves awake."

It is the ancient "Know Thyself" and the lesson, deepened and developed, persists into the second poem. It, too, is made up of many shorter poems—spoken by the Angel Gabriel, Joseph, Mary, Shepherds, Wise Men, Chorus, Narrator, Soldiers and others. It contains also two remarkable prose passages, "The Meditation of Simeon" and the Shavian soliloquy of Herod on the unpleasant necessity of the Massacre of The Innocents. There is more than a suggestion of a mystical experience, an Escape from present Hell ("Alone, alone, about a dreadful wood/Of conscious evil runs a lost mankind") through a surrender to Divine Love in the revelation of truth. In a world of social and spiritual chaos, salvation can be by miracle only; and miracle, the Advent of Truth, can come only with denial of all that was accepted as Reality. Acceptance of the miracle alone can restore to man his wholeness and peace; surrender of

identity alone can give him back his lost identity. The verse is packed with so many and so different ideas, intelligibility is so often let go for the sake of other less certain merits, that one can only suggest that this may, in some part, be Auden's theme. The simpler lyrics, read for their music and suggestive charm, are perhaps the best whole poems, for in them complete intelligibility is most readily foregone by the reader. Elsewhere the effort to grasp formal statements which may state nothing compatible with their portentousness, interferes with pleasure and one is uneasily aware of shifting foundations, as the poet, for all his expressed virtue, rises paradoxically to his depressions, and embarks upon passages of despair and cynicism with the same home-coming eagerness as a novelist upon his emotional crises. Yet both poems, however they may interpose irritating affectations between the reader and the meaning, however lacking in any warmth of characterisation, are real and important achievements in modern poetry, intellectually and aesthetically exciting.

W.P.M.

CHURCH CONTINUITY AND UNITY. By H. Burn-Murdock. Cambridge University Press. 15s. net.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH. By The Rt. Rev. A. C. Headlam, C.H., D.D. Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 2s. net.

The problem of Church unity presents itself to the young and ardent Levite of every denomination as simplicity itself. And so it is—on paper. In sober fact, all the same, it appears to be just perfectly hopeless. Nothing is more futile than to point to the accomplishment of a Presbyterian union in Scotland, because there never was any essential difference between the parties who have at length thus happily composed their senseless quarrel. Nowhere does one see in the ecclesiastical world of our day any blending of disparates, which is of course the really crucial thing. Most of the high hopes engendered by the Lambeth "Appeal to All Christian People" have for so far, at the end of a quarter of a century, not even a prospect of realization. Conferences, Committees, and sub-committees of all kinds at Edinburgh, Stockholm, Lausanne, and elsewhere in the U.S.A. as well have passed weighty resolutions and drawn up long-winded reports; but Church unity is not, so far as our information goes, making any discernible appearance on the most distant horizon. The various Greek Patriarchates officially affirmed the validity of Anglican Orders, inter-communion with the Old Catholics and with the Church of Rumania did eventuate, it is true; yet meagre results of this kind could not honestly be said to be "a cloud the size of a man's hand." How fervently we wish it were otherwise!

It occurs to us to ask what have been the chief causes of disunity? The answer to this question is simple indeed. All theological experts are agreed that the most detestable sin in the sight of God is pride. Pride was the Original Sin; not what most people think it was; but that is so. Pride was the immediate cause of the first great schism. The ostensible origin of the calamity was the insertion of *Filioque* into the Nicene Creed; but let us hear what Gibbon says about it, who, be it remembered, was pronounced by Cardinal Newman to be "perhaps the only English writer who has any claim to be considered an ecclesiastical historian": "The rising majesty of Rome could no longer brook the insolence of a rebel; and Michael Cerularius was excommunicated in the heart of Constantinople by the pope's legates. Shaking the dust from their feet,

they deposited on the altar of St. Sophia a direful anathema, which enumerates the seven mortal heresies of the Greeks, and devotes the guilty teachers, and their unhappy sectaries, to the eternal society of the devil and his angels." Thus commenced the scandal of Church disunity; and that was in 1054 A.D.

Just as the Renaissance was irresistible, so the Reformation was inevitable. On the character of its development we pronounce nothing. Had the schemes of reform lain in the hands of Erasmus and men of his stamp, another dreadful schism might very well have been avoided. No human power could have restrained Luther. He was titanic. Moderate men like Contarini and Caraffa were convinced that, if doctrine alone was involved, the wounds could easily be healed. But they were at least two decades too late. The Regensburg Conference ended in smoke. Calvin as we might expect helped to wreck it.

The Church of England presents a totally different problem. When everything has been said that can be produced as evidence in the case between Henry and the Holy See, we are at liberty to doubt if relations were ever more strained than those between Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII. We do not read that any of Henry's minions offered the Pope personal violence. There is no similar episode to that of Agnani in the English Reformation. And when charity has made even generous allowance for the difficulties of Paul IV, the stipulations by which he would allow Elizabeth to reign were surprisingly lacking in fact. A lady may be indifferent if she is called a heretic: no woman will brook being called a bastard—no, not by the first Bishop in Christendom.

We should have no difficulty in maintaining that immeasurably the greatest Pontiff of modern times was Leo XIII. His was a culture and ability that even in very advanced old age gripped the imagination and charmed the world. Leo had no higher earthly ambition than the visible union of the Church. All his hopes were centred on some possible accommodation with the Anglican Communion based on an official recognition of the validity of its orders. Cardinal Vaughan saw his position endangered and cried halt. The Malines Conversations were torpedoed at a later date by Cardinal Bourne on the very same consideration. Officially to recognise Canterbury and York, and especially the former, would, of course, ring down the curtain on Westminster Cathedral and all that it stands for. Solving the problem by making the Church of England a Uniat is to pursue a mirage. Was it Stevenson who said: "There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life: they have all to be patiently unravelled"? Dr. Burn-Murdock's fine book is almost a heroic effort to unloose these ecclesiastical knots and point the way to Unity. The whole technique of Reunion, or Unity, or whatever it should be called, is here set forth. No relevant contingency appears to have been missed. He divides his book into three main sections, all of them bristling with topical material. The first is *The Church in the light of Scripture*. We cannot be expected, nor do we intend, to analyse these divisions; yet we find an old hardy annual here in the exegesis of the word *ekklesia*, Church, which was explained to us over forty years ago as the "calling out" of the Greek Republics. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns devotes almost ten pages of his epoch-making *The Riddle of the New Testament* to the discussion of this word which he regards as constituting a problem in semasiology. It is never-ending. Part two is devoted to *Continuity in the organic life of the Church through the centuries*. We can only afford two comments at this juncture. One is to express our delight at seeing Provost Salmon's old "tunnel" in the landscape again. It was a magnificent metaphor,

The Church went into it with Bishop and Presbyter as convertible terms to denote the same thing: it emerged from the darkness with Bishops a step up and Presbyters where they were. Our author shows us some shafts of illumination in the tunnel from the epistle of Clement to Corinth and the Ignatian epistles also. The second comment is that those who are interested in this review should pay attention to "The Other Ellogimoi" of Chapter XVI arising from the tunnel. Part three states that *Continuity is an essential of the Church and its unity*. To any who know nothing about it, a page or so dealing with The South India Scheme should be interesting and informative: we have it here. Let me now answer a perplexity! We read on page 179: "It cannot be disputed that the Church of England is a comprehensive Church, though what it is that holds it together I have never been able to discover, etc." The Book of Common Prayer holds it together. He would like also to discover what holds the Free Churches apart. The answer is the dissidence of Dissent.

Shall we now briefly look at the other side of things through the spectacles of Bishop Headlam! His little brochure in the form of an address to the Gloucester Diocesan Conference is a summary of well-known views that he has already expressed at far greater length elsewhere. His attitude to the question of Church Unity is tolerant, wise, and statesman-like, though we are not in complete agreement with all his positions. Unity according to the Bishop depends upon the Christian character. Party-spirit and schism are born of defects of character, because we are not lowly and meek, because we are not long-suffering, because we do not forbear one another in love. He cannot accept any theory of the Church (and more power to him!) which says that a good Wesleyan is not a member of it. The members of the Christian Church are all who believe in the Lord Jesus and are baptized, although many of them are without the full privileges of Church life.

We take umbrage at Dr. Headlam's interpretation of schism. According to his view we are all schismatics. Pure bosh! Dr. Major comes in for much castigation. We learn that he "is very well intentioned, but he is very obtuse."

There are important utterances here on the Apostolic Succession. With very great deference, we suggest that his Lordship is all wrong about the transmission of Grace through the laying on of hands. We say so because the office for the Consecration of Bishops in the Prayer-Book is so clear, simple, and explicit at the actual commission: all that the writer denies is there categorically affirmed. But how whole-heartedly we agree with him when he says: "I do not think we are justified in denying the spiritual efficacy of the orders and sacraments of the separated bodies."

No praise is too great for these two books. Most cordially we commend them to the attention of "all who profess and call themselves Christians."

SAMUEL B. CROOKS.

SELECTED POEMS. By John Pudney. John Lane. 3s. 6d. nett.

POEMS FROM ITALY. Harrap. 6s. nett.

POEMS FROM INDIA. Chosen by R. N. Currey and R. V. Gibson. Oxford University Press. Rs. 3.

John Pudney published five volumes of verse during the war years, and has been steadily building a reputation for himself as one of the most important of the younger poets and prose-writers in England. This book, a selection of just

under forty poems, shows him to be a good, sound craftsman, free from fashionable affectation. Some of the poems are already well known through having been used in plays or otherwise on the radio, among them being "Smith," "Missing," "Happy-Go-Lucky," and "For Johnny." In these the expression has been so pared of superfluities that their simplicity ran the risk of itself becoming a conscious quaintness. But there is no doubt that these air-force verses, about plain men living and dying in the conditions of their service, are a sincere and telling utterance of fundamental truths.

"Smith, who puts down fear,
Whose young heart
Grapples with pity, whose spirit
Holds life on earth so dear
And death no merit."

Mr. Pudney watches nature with the same loving and accurate vision as he watches his fellow-men, and in his "Elegy for Tom Roding," feeling for a countryside mingles with feeling for its inhabitants until they form a single image in the mind—an image of grave, enduring significance. It is good to read Mr. Pudney and appreciate how he suggests, in words of a deceptive simplicity, the more permanent preoccupations of the human spirit and how his affection, the true artist's, affection for his subject expresses itself in the right, revealing, yet commonplace word.

The seventy-two poems in *Poems From Italy* were selected from nearly six hundred entries for Army Educational Corps competitions, all of which were written in nine months of active service in the Italian theatre of war—a remarkable example of the will to self-expression under adverse conditions. A direct sincerity of feeling and expression is a characteristic of this anthology, as it was of its predecessor, *Poems from the Desert*, and indeed of most anthologies by serving soldiers. There is no "flag-flapping," no "hymns of hate"; but, instead, a frequent desire and hope that out of the waste and horror a life without enmity may emerge. Perhaps the most prevalent mood in these poems is one of nostalgia for the lanes and fields and houses of home, more frequent even than preoccupation with death—death of comrades, death imminent for oneself and making the unregarded gift of life real as never before. There is a sympathetic preface to the collection by Siegfried Sassoon.

Poems from India is also an anthology of poems by army personnel. It is an altogether more ambitious, and artistically more important, collection than *Poems from Italy*, and its ambitions are triumphantly realised. It is, indeed, a remarkable collection of poetry by any standard and needs no apology. Opening with four poems by Alan Lewis (whose death was one of the greatest losses to English literature in recent years), it sets itself a high standard, and the quality of the collection is proved when one is led to no disastrous descent from that first level. The Editors (R. N. Currey's work is known to readers of this magazine) have planned the book most ably, and each of the sections:—"Indian Scene," "Nostalgia," "Ex-India," "Troops," "War," "Death and Memorial"—has its place and purpose in the general design. Again, here, the outstanding characteristic is sincerity; but there is far more evidence of the professional poet at work in this than in other "forces anthologies." The average of technical skill is far higher, there is a wider range of subject, a greater

subtlety and detachment and a far greater readiness to indulge in abstract thought. The plain man forced to poetry by the impact of the terrible and strange is only a seldom contributor to *Poems from India*, and the notes on the authors help to explain the quality of the collection by revealing that a high proportion were, in private life, engaged in definitely "intellectual" occupations even when not actually professional writers. The line drawings by W. H. Blackburn are excellent.

W. P. M.

TRANSLATION (LONDON). Edited by Neville Braybrooke and Elizabeth King
Phoenix Press. 2s.

Good translators, who translate occasionally, will seldom bother translating a poem unless they have a special predilection for the poem—the poems will most often, therefore, in such cases be good ones. I suppose this, as well as the good judgment of the editors, is what accounts for the general level of excellence of this volume of translations (The First Series) from several romantic and classic languages. One would like to have said a word about most of the individual poems.

A translation of an ode of Horace, "at the shrine of Apollo," is a welcome piece of work by Edmund Blunden. No poem could more perfectly exemplify the mixture of Horatian prosiness with golden or potentially golden poetry, which distinguishes Horace from all other poets. It is a banality which, in his works, often seems more banal than the banality itself of reality. Even things, by nature full of romance, sea-voyages, merchant affairs, even leisure in a garden, tend in his hands to become divested of romance. Yet his higher flights are somewhere upon the verge of greatness. Mr. Blunden renders the poem very finely, with a quietness which Horace himself would have owned gladly, or envied, and lends it a faintly sensible quality of spirit—a purer spirit of poetry than was Horace's own, for all the excellence of the original poem.

"To Sylvia," the second of the poems here by Giacomo Leopardi, translated by John Heathstubs is not a very excellent poem, but I am arrested by a phrase of thought in it, a delicate expansion of the statement, 'she died young, she had no real life,' :—

"You died poor child ; and never saw
The flowering of your years ;
Nor was your heart to melt,
Hearing soft flattery of your dark hair
Or when they praised your shy enamoured glances ;
Nor girl-companions on a holiday
Had talked to you of love."

Three or more of these characteristically Spanish lyrics, included in the volume, are well translated by E. Allison Peers. One by Gil Vicente, a madrigal by Gutierre de Cetina, delicately beautiful, ending—

"Oh, torment of despair !
Eyes lovely, eyes serene,
Look as you will, but let your glance be keen."

and "Excelsior," an exquisite poem by Gaspar Nunez De Ara. I liked also "Today" by Roxlo, and "The Cradle" by Pedroni, translated, both, by Hugo Manning; while "Poem for a Gramophone Record" by Eduardo Gonzalez Lannza is a very considerable and uniquely original poem.

It is noticeable how many of these translations from European languages—Italian, Spanish, French—have a comparable type of theme, tone and quality—the song-flavour—some even of the modern ones—of an old harmonium with mellowed keys. "Poem" by Paul Verlaine, the translation by Edward Marsh, might stand for them all:—

"The piano, kissed by hands not sure nor strong,
Shines dimly in the rose-grey evening air,
The while a well-remembered charming song,
Whose wavering wings its half-heard whispers bear,
With fearful-seeming pauses here and there,
Steals round the chamber that was Hers so long.

"What is this sudden strain that brings repose
In lingering cadence on my languid eyes?
What means the playful air that floats and flows?
Why seeks it me, the tune that softly rose,
And on the way towards the window dies,
Half-open on the little garden close?"

I wonder if Arthur Rimbaud's half-romantically expressed war poem "The Sleeper in the Valley" is not more enduringly effective than many of the more purely realistic war poems of modern times—those of them in which the great art incentive, or ethical drive, has not conditioned the outpouring.

There is a poignant lyrical poem by Maurice Maeterlinck, in this collection. The translation, a very good one, is by H. S. Otter. "Poem" by Hélène Vicaresco, which also is translated by H. S. Otter is a finished piece of work.

"Patmos" by Friedrich Hölderlin is the longest poem translated in the book. It is done by Vernon Watkins. Its fresh delicacy of vision and the chastened quality of its imagery is exemplified by these two lines—

"And in his great soul calmly foreknowing, the Lord
Spoke out death and the last love;"

A very fresh, a rare and quite peculiar quality of imagination clings to the poems here by Stefan George, translated from the German by different authors, Kenneth Gee, and Carol North Valhope and Ernst Morwitz. It is a quality which is sister to the fine work of Rilke and perhaps also Hölderlin as seen in the poem "Patmos" in this volume. It is a lovely quality, though scarcely a Teutonic one. It is like a Latin flowering of the exuberantly imaginative Teutonic bough. To specify—what a delicacy of vision is in these two lines by Rilke—

"Yet is there one who balances this fall
Endlessly in his hands supremely light."

The poem from which I have taken the quotation is rendered by Vernon Watkins. "Mysterious Landscape" by Hans Carossa, translated R. F. C. Hull, is in

keeping with them. "The Meeting" by Henrik Hertz is a melodious poem skilfully translated from the Danish by R. P. Keigwin. "Hips" by Thorkil Barford is a vividly striking one rendered by the same author.

Two translations from Pushkin by John Ounsted serve to exemplify the Russian author's work. "Dionysus in his Cradle," a poem translated from the modern Greek of Anghelos Sikelianos, the translator Paul Nord, concludes the selection. A fine poem with a magnificent peroration.

This is a book to be heartily commended.

J. L. DONAGHY.

THE NINETEEN TWENTIES. By Douglas Goldring. Nicholson & Watson. 12s. 6d.

Readers in Ireland will probably turn first to the Irish chapter, and it is an attractive picture which Douglas Goldring paints of the easy conversational Dublin society in the spacious days of Yeats and Russell. His own view of this was from Ely Place where the Duncans lived, and where hosts of friends came. Yet the more important part of this book is concerned with the trend of the world between the wars, and particularly with political, diplomatic developments in Britain. This is an excellent analysis of world affairs from the left standpoint.

The contrasting personalities—and characters—of E. D. Morel and Ramsay MacDonald, serve to bring out the author's view of the opportunist nature of the British Labour Movement. When the book was written the General Election in Britain had not taken place, though it is mentioned in a footnote towards the end. Mr. Goldring evidently has not much faith that the English Labour Government will reverse the policy of its Conservative predecessors at home or abroad.

Besides politics, the author reviews art and literature from a social standpoint. And his writing gains piquancy because of his intimate knowledge of the people concerned. The following extract gives his angle of vision:—

"Of the poets of the 'twenties, the dominating, or, at least, the most fashionable figure was T. S. Eliot, whose *The Waste Land* had a powerful but, as I heretically believe, pernicious influence on his younger contemporaries. It is unfortunate for Europe—perhaps also for the United States—that cultured Americans who make the return journey to the 'old' countries are nearly always heavily burdened with a sense of the past. They are, therefore, sentimental reactionaries, either social snobs like the amazingly gifted but deplorable Henry James, or culture-hounds like the tragic comedian Ezra Pound, or dons-with-a-difference like the religious materialist Eliot, whose intellectual climate seems to me about half a century behind our times."

A good deal is said about the Bright Young People—who were a feature of London society—and others like them on the Riviera. It is true that they are considered as a social symptom, but—for such worthless characters—they take up a disproportionate amount of space. At the end there is an acute—if bitter—summing up of the issues now facing the world. Mr. Goldring believes that, "the moral conscience of the people around in the 'twenties, has been steadily quickened by events, and their confused aspirations, though frustrated, have never been suppressed. It is this mass feeling which, in England, slowly but inevitably, affects political changes." This is a book that will certainly repay reading by students of politics and of life.

R. M. F.

CATALOGUE OF THE WHITMAN COLLECTION IN THE DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

Being a part of the Trent Collection given by Dr. and Mrs. Josiah C. Trent.
Compiled by Ellen Frances Frey. Durham, North Carolina. Duke University Library. 1945.

To the courtesy of the Duke University Library we are indebted for a copy of this well-printed, and well-edited booklet, which is, in spite of its rather unpretending title, a valuable addition to the bibliography of Whitman. The nucleus of the collection as we learn from the preface was presented to the Duke University Library in 1942 by Dr. and Mrs. Josiah C. Trent in honour of their four daughters. Since that time the collection has been enriched, not only by further gifts from the original donors, but by the acquisition of many books and MSS. from the collection of Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke, who was one of Whitman's literary executors, and from other sources. The Catalogue is divided into twelve sections ranging from Whitman MSS. to Portraits and Miscellaneous Whitman items. The illustrations—15 in number—include a facsimile of "The Brooklyn Freeman," Vol. I, No. I, edited by Whitman, of which only one copy is known to exist.

It is interesting to note that amongst the earliest appreciators of the great American poet are the names of three distinguished Irish writers: Edward Dowden, with whom Whitman carried on a correspondence lasting for some years; T. W. Rolleston, who published in 1889 a German translation of selections over the title *Grashalme*, and had, earlier written in collaboration with H. B. Cotterill a pamphlet "Ueber Wordsworth und Walt Whitman," and Standish O'Grady, who, over the pen-name *Arthur Clive* contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in December, 1875, an essay entitled: "Walt Whitman, the Poet of Joy." It should also be remembered that the earliest "full-length" study of Whitman—"The Good Gray Poet," 1866, was the work of an Irishman, William Douglas O'Connor.

I DID PENAL SERVITUDE. By D. 83222. Metropolitan Publishing Co. 8s. 6d.

No one who wants to understand what it is like to serve a term in prison should miss this informative book. The author is a man who was sentenced to three years imprisonment. He had not that sustaining feeling that he was in the right which a political offender has. And his struggle for rehabilitation when he came out was much harder.

Prison in Ireland has been modelled on the British system which owed so much to the "reformers," John Howard and Elizabeth Fry. They worked successfully for solitary confinement and hard labour. The author comments: "Elizabeth Fry's puritan nostrils quivered with horror when she saw the women prisoners in Newgate standing in groups talking and laughing in idleness. She lived to see the day when, through her so-called reforms, prisoners worked in absolute silence, while herself or her pious friends read suitable uplifting tracts on Repentance and Remorse."

As a contrast we are told of the "Irish system" introduced in 1853, under which prisoners graduated into five probation groups, each step giving a little more freedom and responsibility. The originator "feared the danger of discharging a man who has known nothing but institutional life for years, and is suddenly required to live the life of a free adult with the individuality of a

registered number rather than the personality of a human being." This is really the kernel of the matter so far as prison reform is concerned. The old "Irish System"—forgotten here—has inspired prison reform abroad.

Details are given of the prison visits—the cage method and the box-like compartments with a warder in between. Not only is the purpose of the visit destroyed, but relatives and friends are punished by a display of harshness. The prisoners are so used to it that they are not impressed. Reclamation as well as punishment should be the aim, and no one need fear—as this book shows—that punishment will not be severe enough if men are deprived of their freedom. Yet, Dr. Whately, a hundred years ago, objected to transportation because it was too lenient.

Apart from his own experiences, the author tells of many other prisoners. He speaks of the friendly and Christian attitude of Countess Markievicz towards women prisoners in Aylesbury Gaol. The clear vivid writing in this book, the note of quiet realism, the revelation of what happens to prisoners when they are released, makes it a notable contribution to the literature of prison reform. And it has fine qualities as a human story.

R. M. Fox.

BRENDAN THE NAVIGATOR. An Interpretation. By Dr. George A. Little. M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd. 10s. 6d. net.

In this strange and fascinating book Dr. Little pursues St. Brendan along the byeways of legend and catches up with him on the main road of history. On first turning the pages, the book seems to be a record of research rather than an original contribution to the serious narratives about the voyages of St. Brendan; there are so many foot-notes, so many references and such a multitude of authorities quoted. But, except for those scholars who love such things for their own sake, after the first few pages, the ordinary reader may take these for granted, and will become absorbed in this unique story of the wonderful voyager. Here is not only adventure and history, but the mystery that is part of life. Brendan's character develops as we read. He shares the curiosity of all intelligent human beings about the world, the universe, and possesses as well the driving force of the true missionary—the passion to share knowledge and conviction.

The author gives us the background of St. Brendan, when the young Christian world existed side by side with the older, dying pagan way of life. He reminds us that Brendan's tutor, Erc, the Brehon, had been a druid and gives an outline of druidic teaching and beliefs. Not only does Dr. Little agree with those who declare that America was first discovered by Irish priests, but he traces the survival of early Christian teaching in the Aztec religion. This part of the book is amazingly interesting.

There are copies of medieval maps, and some fine photographs of scenery and ancient buildings in Brendan's country.

P. L.

POETRY OF NORA GRACE. With a foreword by Oliver St. John Gogarty. Cahill. 5s. nett.

"I have always supposed," writes Dr. Gogarty in a remarkable preface, "that there is a mystic connection between the writings of an author and his name." And, in far-off America he remembers how, long ago in Ireland, he

used to meet the late Sir Valentine Grace, and (seeing that "from the emancipated and the magnanimous poetry is born") he feels that there must have been a blood relationship to explain these verses by a young American girl. To him they suggest analogies with Blake, Shakespeare, Burns, Keats, Landor and Yeats. Actually, they are such as any gentle, sensitive, emotional girl might have written, and it is not surprising that members of her family should wish to preserve them after her untimely death. But it seems rather less than kind to expose their fragile immaturity in the van of Beauty's war against those unscrupulous wielders of scissors and paste, those "Judases of the Beautiful," the "modern" poets, who are for the most part (Dr. Gogarty is sure), "Internationalists, Communists and followers of one of the four great enemies of the human race—Freud." The book is excellently produced.

W. P. M.

TELLERS OF TALES. By Roger Lancelyn Green, B.Litt., M.A. Edmund Ward, Leicester. 8s. 6d. net.

Humanity has never known whether to despise its story-tellers, or to honour them, but has always found them the most necessary of writers. "Tell me a story!" is a refrain that must have been uttered at the first camp fire, and is still one of the strongest motives for learning to read.

Here is the story of story-tellers for children—only English ones—for the last hundred years. Roger Lancelyn Green is a collector of books who has no interest in first editions or bindings. He collects books for the story in them.

In the reading life of a human being, says Mr. Green, first comes the story, then a longing for another story of the same kind, and so on, to an interest in the writer of a favourite book. But, with young people, reading is often a matter of chance. Children read what they are given, or any book about the house. Later on, when they are able to explore for themselves, they may have missed a great many of the best books until they are too old to appreciate them thoroughly.

The great quality of *Tellers of Tales* is the author's own gift for story-telling. And the interest is not merely for children. He gives a great many incidents which are quite illuminating for writers. Telling the story of Rider Haggard's adventures, he relates how Haggard wrote *King Solomon's Mines* for a bet, and sent it to W. E. Henley, who advised Cassell's, the publishers, to accept it. "They sent for its author and offered him a hundred pounds for the full copyright of his story, or else a very small royalty on each copy they sold. Haggard decided to take the hundred pounds. But while the director was out of the room, fetching the agreement for him to sign, one of the clerks in the publishing office, who must have heard how highly his managers really thought of the book coughed apologetically and murmured: 'Excuse me, sir; I should advise you to take the royalty.' Then, hearing a noise, he subsided into his dark corner again. But in a moment the author had made up his mind, and when the director returned, he told him that he had decided to take the royalty after all." A lucky decision for Rider Haggard!

Beginning with Charles Lamb and Maria Edgeworth's *Moral Tales*, we read of the early writers, such as George Macdonald, Mrs. Craik, Juliana Horatia

Ewing, up to Edith Nesbit, and Kenneth Grahame. The book is a treasure-house for a child, and is invaluable for children's librarians.

P. L.

THE BUTTERCUP FIELD AND OTHER STORIES. By Gwyn Jones. The Penmark Press. 7s. 6d.

The Anglo-Welsh story has become a highly-stylised, easily-recognisable form. It has travelled far, but where does it go from here?

Gwyn Jones, in this volume of short stories, writes in the familiar form, placing in close juxtaposition the earthly-material and the supernatural. In one story, *The Buttercup Field*, there is the reality of the landscape and against it the ideal, characterless beauty of the Welsh heiress of tradition, courted by two lovers, the bard and the silver-throated singer. Ann Morgan does not become flesh or spirit: to add significance to the old story, this woman should have been given identity. Is it enough to say of her on her bridal morning: "If Ann Morgan had been lovely before, that day she was enough to give eternity for?" She remains a pallid lay figure. There should be magic in the spoken or written word with power to evoke the aspect of a person and the deepest thoughts of that person. Where that subtle spell is lacking, as in this story, the praise of Ann Morgan's beauty is something of no account because it is abstract, attached to no living form, but to a dim wraith from the past. If she is not warm and quick, how can one believe in the high passions of her lovers?

This is a serious matter in Anglo-Welsh literature of the present time. Our writers must go deeper, must explore the labyrinth, dive into the wells of the secret heart; not be content with the flower on the tongue tip, with the outer husk of things.

From many of these stories rises a strong atmosphere of masculinity; the men are living characters, usually caricatures in the manner of Rowlandson. Of such are Sir Rhodri in *Ora Pro Boscis*, and Gwydion in the tale *Gwydion Mathrafal*, who was "a swarthy man and very hairy except on the head . . . His mouth was on the big side, and his lips loose, and it might almost be said of Gwydion as was said of Gwetyl son of Gwestad, that on the day he was sad one of his lips drooped to his navel and the other turned up like a cap on his head."

These men live in a roaring virile world in a strong land warmed by a brassy sun. They are red-necked males who laugh and swagger, curse and brag.

Allowing for all the wit and fantasy, the gusto of these tales, it yet seems that this volume forms part of a closed chapter in the evolution of the short story. Until the tale is made universal, rooted maybe in locality, but reaching out to the full stretch of man's spirit, there will be more than the stalemate that has begun to show itself in Anglo-Welsh letters. There will be decadence and corruption where, not so long ago, was renaissance.

It is to eager minds like Gwyn Jones that we must look for leadership in getting us through the narrow archway of the enchanted castle that is Wales into the no less enchanted universe outside, of which the castle and its inhabitants are part. With our rich heritage we can afford to give and take lavishly in letters as well as in other spheres.

BRENDA CHAMBERLAIN.

COLLECTED POEMS OF ELIZABETH SHANE (in two volumes). Dundalgan Press, Dundalk. 6s. each, or post free 12s. 6d.

Since many of these poems have been reprinted several times, the verse-reading public should be acquainted with them. Miss Elizabeth Shane writes in traditional ballad form, often using Northern dialect, and, for the most part, slipping smoothly along in well-known metres. There is much humour and humanity in her verse. "The Truant"—about a very little boy—rings true:—

For you can't do nothing with a penny in a garden—

I showed mine twice to the gardener man,

I showed it to a bee and a big brown butterfly

And I watered it with the watering can.

Her chief love is of the sea, which she expresses in marine language various as magical. The book is beautifully produced, printed on excellent paper, illustrated by perfect photographs. "The Rocks off Gola," in particular, is a picture not to be forgotten.

POEMS TO MARY. By Jonathan Hanaghan. The Runa Press, Monkstown. 8s. 6d. net.

Nowadays that broken hearts run into so many editions was not said to-day or yesterday. Indeed the modern mind is abashed before direct personal emotion. Poetry is not philosophy, said Keats, though the poet needs all philosophy. Poetry is not emotion either. Mr. Hanaghan is at his best in one or two simple pieces:—

stars' burn

was stone

when she did not return . . .

a candle lit

a candle blown.

O who can fathom it.

THE FLOWERING BRANCH. An Anthology of Irish Poetry, Past and Present. Selected and Arranged by John Irvine. (Derrick MacCord. 2/- nett.).

Mr. Irvine's anthology is primarily designed to serve "as an introduction to Irish Poetry for those not already familiar with its delights." Wisely, therefore, he has confined himself for the most part to familiar poems. Here, to take examples at random, one finds Callanan's "Outlaw of Lough Lene," de Vere's "Little Black Rose," Mangan's "Dark Rosaleen," Rolleston's "Clonmacnoise," James Stephens's "The Goat Paths," Seumas O'Sullivan's "A Blessing on the Cows," and W. B. Yeats's "When You Are Old." There are fifty poems by forty-six poets and the collection possesses an admirable continuity of mood, imposed by the compiler's personality and his skill in arrangement. Ranging from Duffett to the present day in his choice, but omitting Swift and Goldsmith, Mr. Irvine has succeeded in making a selection of poems in English almost every one of which is an example of what Thomas MacDonagh called "the Irish mode." Not only those for whom it is avowedly intended, but those to whom most of its contents is already well-known will find this little book a delightful pocket companion.